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The role of career development in
relation to the developmental contextual
position of young people in New Zealand

Considerations for Policy Development and
Career Services in New Zealand Secondary Schools

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

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Abstract

This is a study of young peoples' career development needs and awareness and the relationship to personal development at the interface of school provision and wider economic, political and educational change that impinge on those relationships. It is theoretically embedded within the developmental contextual position of adolescent development, but much of the study is concerned with generating a comprehensive data base to inform policy development and practice considerations in careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools.

It begins, therefore, with an overview of the analytical framework of developmental contextualism, and goes on to explore more fully the dimensions presumed to be operating in relation to the career development of New Zealand youth. In doing so, it contributes a multidisciplinary perspective, the essence of which it is argued, is an integral and necessary consideration in the provision of a developmentally appropriate and socially accountable approach to careers services in secondary schools.

An examination of senior secondary school students' career development characteristics and experiences to which schools are in a position to respond forms the central empirical study of the latter part of this thesis. School careers staff, parents' and students' believed that schools were important environments for young people's career exploration and development and that an integrated, comprehensive careers service was an acceptable responsibility of secondary schooling. The careers information bases in schools were considered to be well resourced. Other dimensions, including career education, career advice and career counselling were nominated the most crucial areas needed for improvement.

Limited opportunity for professional development and training in careers work was considered by staff to be the greatest barrier toward the provision of developmentally appropriate careers assistance. Other barriers included limited time allocation for careers work, low status in the school and unclear specifications regarding the role of careers staff and career services.

Parents did not feel adequately informed about the nature and role of careers assistance in schools and this was considered a hindrance toward constructive involvement with their childrens career development.

For the majority of students concern around career-related issues represented the source of considerable anxiety in their life. Careers assistance was highly valued by these young people, with most expressing concern about access to good quality careers advice and careers counselling. Limited access to specialised assistance at the personal level was reflected by students' self reports on measures of career development and personal coping resources. Generally, the young people reported that they had not engaged adequately in appropriate career planning activities; had few 'useful' career exploration experiences; possessed insufficient knowledge about the nature and requirements of the world of work or occupations; and were not particularly knowledgeable about what to consider in making career-related (including education, training and work) decisions.

Statistically significant relationships were found between scores on indices of career development and scores on a measure of how students coped with career-related concerns. While most young people approached career problems constructively, those students who were less likely to have engaged in useful planning and exploration and who had limited knowledge of the world of work generally were more likely to approach career development concerns non-productively, such as worrying about what might happen or closing oneself off from the problem.

Perhaps the most salient theme to emerge in this thesis is the conviction that the career development of young people is a social as well as a personal process. Both the individual and society have much to gain from the young person's capacity for realism and purpose concerning school and post-school pathways and ultimately in the possession of a beginning repertoire of personal resources to manage career transitions in future journeys during their adult years. Ultimately, the complex interaction of individuals and society in relation to career pathways demand school-based career services which are clearly defined in policy, operationalised in official documentation, adequately resourced in relation to personnel and training and properly integrated alongside existing school practices.

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We live in challenging and inspiring times of change, many aspects of which are documented in this thesis. The process of writing about these issues has underlined for me the inseparability of human development and the developing context and how important it is to take seriously the irreducibility of human experience, not only in science, but also in policy and practice.

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PART 1

Introduction

1

Overview

1.1 Introduction

The past decade has seen arguably the most far reaching reforms in New Zealand's learning and work systems. In the global context, such reforms are common amongst advanced industrial societies. Within this context, Watts (1996) has argued the case for a redefinition of 'career' as a "lifetime of progression in learning and work" (p.44) and a process now forged by the individual, not foretold, as had been the case for previous generations. One implication is that secondary schools are now charged with facilitating the young person's readiness, not only for movement to the post-school environment, but for continued learning and career transitions throughout their working lives.

Careers assistance has been a feature of the secondary school environment for decades, but largely as an ancillary service and typically as a 'quick fix' students received just before leaving school. Much of this reflects a largely reactive, unsystematic and professionally uninformed approach, which for a long time has been the character of careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools. In the face of this, in July of 1996, the Minister of Education (1996a) declared the statutory right of all secondary school students to developmentally appropriate careers assistance. This declaration followed on the heels of reform in the country's learning and work systems (Hawke, 1988; Learning for Life II, 1989; Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b) with accompanying national reviews in the areas of youth employment (Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994a, 1994b) and career information and guidance provisions (Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995). The challenge now is to provide informed national policy guidelines on career development that are responsive to the career development needs and awareness of young people at school and beyond. This thesis was undertaken to examine the necessary components of the task through a developmental contextual analysis of the career development characteristics of New Zealand adolescents.

'Developmental Contextualism' (Vondracek, Lerner & Schulenberg, 1986), which has its conceptual roots in the ecological orientation towards human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) accepts that development occurs in a context and that this context

must be understood and integrated in any policy intended for practice. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of a developmental contextual position is the necessity for a multidisciplinary approach. In advocating a multidisciplinary approach to careers assistance, not only are young people's individual characteristics and needs salient but so too are historical, political, economic, educational and social factors. Thus, one of the goals of this thesis was a synthesis of the literature and issues reflecting the various contexts responsive to young people's career development needs. A second goal was to explore this awareness in school settings and to assess empirically the career development characteristics of students to which school environments are in a position to respond.

The first goal involved a comprehensive integration of literary discussion comprising a review of policy, practice and theory bringing together information sources considered relevant to a developmental-contextual analysis of the area. In the writer's awareness, this is the first time this has occurred in a single document in New Zealand. The intention has been to provide an expansive informed data-base for national policy targeting careers services in secondary schools, and also, a comprehensive learned source for further debate and discussion.

The second goal was pursued through an empirical study of a sample of secondary school seniors, with the purpose of providing a starting point for further research toward developmentally appropriate careers assistance in this country's secondary schools. Indeed, as previous reviews of careers services have indicated, it is the dearth of such a data-base that has limited the potential of both policy and practice in careers assistance in New Zealand (Bloor & Brook, 1993; Career Information & Guidance Review Panel, 1995; Gordon, 1989; Hesketh & Kennedy, 1991; Khan, 1986; Miller, Manthei & Gilmore, 1993). As a corollary, reaching the potential of careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools rests upon the future use of such data-bases.

1.1.1 The Conceptual Framework

The developmental contextual position (Vondracek, Lerner & Schulenberg, 1986) draws from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, addressing the interaction of the developing person with the changing environment. This perspective is embedded in the position that health and well-being from the level of the person to that of society are intimately connected to, and affected by, the environment in which we live. This

perspective is particularly relevant to the development of informed national policy and practice guidelines for career development which ultimately are situated at the interface of personal and societal needs.

Central to a developmental contextual orientation is the notion of interrelationship between systems, extending from the most individual of behaviours to the most encompassing of societal influences. In the context of adolescent career development, the connections are between the developing adolescent, the family, the school system, and the larger historical, political, economic, educational and social forces. Not only do these change, but so too do the connections and interactions between them. The challenge is, therefore, to identify educational policies and practices that promote change and in a direction that extends opportunity for the young, enhancing their well-being, not only in the present but in terms of future development as well.

1.2 Scope and Objectives

The starting point of this thesis is that career development occurs within a context and that positive career information and guidance policy formulation must be sensitive to the effect of macro-level decisions on the micro-level experiences of youth. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979):

The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive mutual adaptation between an active growing human being, and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives as this process is affected by relationships between these settings and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded (p.21).

In this study, the primary "setting" is viewed as the school. Although educational policies are far from synonymous with "larger contexts", they are typically seen as the instruments used by schools to improve schooling outcomes and to protect against or offset the impact of social, economic and other forces on the career development patterns of young people. One such 'other force' is the family, and, in this study, elements of the family setting that impact on the young person's emergent career development and awareness are considered in relation to experiences within the school setting.

This work herein is approached with both descriptive and exploratory purposes in mind. On the one hand, it is intended to provide sound, comprehensive information about the career development needs and concerns of secondary school students, and the implications thereof for continued healthy development. On the other, it has been designed to enable ecological analyses of the relationships between personal, family and school variables in the broader context of educational, social, economic and political characteristics that interact with those relationships to influence adolescent career development and awareness.

The value of adopting a developmental contextual framework is to ensure the inclusion of relevant personal and environmental variables and to provide parameters about the generalisability of findings. This is consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) understanding of ecological research:

An ecological experiment is an effort to investigate the progressive accommodation between two or more environmental systems or their structural components.....It is from this perspective that the primary purpose of the ecological experiment becomes not hypothesis testing, but discovery - the identification of those systems' properties and processes that affect and are affected by the behaviour and development of the human being (pp.36-37).

With this ecological approach in mind, the objectives of the study were as follows:

1.2.1 Objectives of the Thesis

(1) To provide a conceptual synthesis of the context of adolescent career development in New Zealand, including the historical, political, economic, social, educational, familial and developmental dimensions. In order to accommodate the mandate targeted by this objective, the synthesis is presented in three chapters, making up the second part of the thesis. It includes discussion of:

- (i) the 'big picture'; an overview of the country's economy, polity, and learning and work systems in which the adolescent is embedded;
- (ii) the nature of careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools, capturing the various influences in the evolution and provision of existing careers services in these settings;

(iii) the nature of adolescence and the capacity of career development, which together define the developmental parameters of relevance to an informed policy for intervention in the career realm.

- (2) To undertake an empirical case study to explore the capacity of secondary school settings to facilitate the career development needs of their senior students. This objective comprised two steps: first of all, to consider career development as an aspect of overall personal development during this life stage, and then, to explore components of careers assistance that schools might reasonably be expected to provide.
- (3) To provide informed comment and direction for consideration in the formation of policy and practice guidelines for career services in secondary schools at the national level.

1.3 Sections of the Thesis

In meeting these objectives, the thesis is presented in four parts.

1.3.1 Part One: Introduction

Part One provides an introduction to ecological principles and the developmental contextual position which guides development of the thesis. This dynamic interactionist framework, it is argued, is a considerable advance on conventional unidirectional models which, invariably, have limited the potential of careers assistance in schools in this country and by corollary, the capacity of career development for young people and in a related sense the nation's social and economic well being.

1.3.2 Part Two: The Ecological Dimensions of Adolescent Career Development in New Zealand (A Conceptual Synthesis)

Part Two consists of three chapters which provide a conceptual synthesis of the ecological dimensions thought to be relevant to adolescent career development in this country. As such, it brings together discussion, policy documentation, theoretical positions and empirical literature relevant to the topic. Together, the chapters comprising Part Two provide the 'informed' substance upon which the assumptions of the empirical study are based, and upon which recommendations for national guidelines are developed.

The first of the chapters in Part Two (Chapter Three), is concerned primarily with features of the outer circle illustrated in Figure ²X.1. It describes the wider macro-level influences which provide the policy context for careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools. It begins, therefore, with an analysis of the country's economic history, which sees the evolution from a relatively insulated, high-income economy dependent on exports of agricultural commodities during the first half of this century, to a small advanced capitalist trading nation more closely linked to international competition, trends and developments in the post World War Two era. It then moves on to examine the way in which major shifts in the nature of the State, and in the relationship between State and economy, have been reflected in the reform of post-compulsory education and training in New Zealand. As a result, careers services in secondary schools have emerged to assume an important role in helping young people to make informed decisions regarding school and post-school pathways.

Much of the 'importance' of careers services in schools, however, remains an ideological position reflected in educational policy statements, with little operational guidance or direction for translation into practice. This is notwithstanding the attendant danger of repeating a cycle of largely reactive, unsystematic and non-professional approaches which characterise the history of careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools. It is this 'danger' which underlies much of the motivation for this research. To identify the situation, Chapter Four documents the nature and evolution of career services in New Zealand secondary schools, much of which is reflected in the wider macro-level trends discussed in Chapter Three.

The final chapter of Part Two (Chapter Five), provides an analysis of the characteristics of adolescent development, including the young person's inner world, associated family relationships and school experiences, in relation to career development needs during adolescence and links to future career journeys in adulthood. The quest for a sense of 'internal coherence' and 'meaningful relatedness' is presented as the central developmental challenge during adolescence. Development in the career realm is presented as a central part of this process. The chapter develops the argument that young people's readiness to confront the challenge of personal meaning and connectedness in career direction mirrors the quality of development that emerges from the experience. This, in turn, sets a pattern for being able to confront and deal with similar challenges in future

career journeys in adulthood. Alongside family dynamics, the nature and quality of school-based careers assistance are presented as powerful settings which influence and are influenced by young people's readiness for career development challenges.

1.3.3 Part Three: Adolescent Career Development in the Secondary School Environment: An Empirical Case Study

Part Three comprises the empirical case study section, with Chapter Six marking the transition. This chapter draws upon the preceding discussions in to formulate assumptions that guide the analysis, and provides a statement of the specific research questions which determine the focus for empirical analysis of adolescent career development needs. At the heart of this chapter is the belief that both the individual and the country's learning and work environments have much to gain from the young person's readiness to make meaningful and informed decisions around school and post-school pathways. Access to developmentally appropriate and professionally informed careers assistance is presented as a basic educational right of all young people in New Zealand and as an integral and fitting responsibility of the secondary education system in particular.

The approach to the analysis of empirical data is described in Chapter Seven, and includes considerations on sampling for the research; the research participants; assessment and analysis of information to address the research questions; issues and considerations in the collection of this information; and, integral to these areas, methodological issues that may limit the generalisability of findings.

Chapter Eight integrates a summary of the results connected to students' assessed career development, alongside focus group contributions from parents and school staff, with a discussion of the literature upon which the assumptions for the analysis are based. The chapter is presented in five sections to capture (i) the nature and role of existing career services in participating schools, (ii) the career development characteristics of students, (iii) the relationship of career development to personal development, (iv) career guidance experiences, and (v) suggestions for improvement of school-based careers services.

1.3.4 Part Four: Epilogue

The final chapter (Chapter Nine) presents a summary of the developmental-contextual position of young people in New Zealand; the capacity of career development; the role of the school environment; and the place of state policy and school charters to support and guide the provision of developmentally appropriate and informed careers services in schools. The chapter then reflects upon salient issues arising from the empirical case study in Part Three, linking these back to those identified in the synthesis of literature on the ecology of adolescent career development (Part Two). A key goal in this process is to distinguish particularly urgent issues for discussion and to locate possible directions for further research. Finally, the chapter closes with a discussion of developmental-contextual considerations which might inform national career development guidelines for the nature and delivery of career services in the country's secondary schools.

The Developmental Contextual Approach

2.1 Introduction

The central belief of this thesis is that the ultimate intervention strategy for career guidance and counselling practitioners and for educational policy makers alike is to identify and encourage the career development strengths of young people, empowering them to take charge of their situation and to change aspects of environments that hinder the realisation of pathways toward healthy adult career development. Contributions toward improvement in policy and practice are best investigated within an ecological framework of adolescent career development.

This Chapter presents an overview of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) characterisation of the ecology of human development, and the adaptation of this model to career development (Lerner & Lerner, 1983; Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986). Together, these contributions provide the conceptual framework used in this study in which the career development characteristics, experiences and needs of secondary school students are explored and discussed.

2.2 The Ecological Framework

Bronfenbrenner (1979) refers to ecology as the properties of the immediate settings in which the person lives and the larger contexts in which these settings are embedded. The essence of an ecological orientation to human development is in recognising that development takes place within a context, and that the various levels of context are interconnected and interact dynamically with one another, as they affect and are affected by the developing person. To quote Bronfenbrenner (1979):

A theoretical conception of the environment extending beyond the behaviour of individuals to encompass functional systems both within and between settings, systems that can also be modified and expanded, contrasts sharply with prevailing research models. These established models typically employ a scientific lens that restricts, darkens, and even blinds the researcher's vision of environmental obstacles and opportunities and of the remarkable potential of

human beings to respond constructively to an ecologically compatible milieu once it is made available. As a result, human capacities and strengths tend to be underestimated (p.7).

2.2.1 'Interconnectedness'

Implicit within this view of development is the principle of 'interconnectedness'. Bronfenbrenner's framework envisions a series of nested, interconnected systems as representing the structure of the ecological environment. They comprise the *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *exosystem* and *macrosystem*. Bronfenbrenner (1979) stated that "the ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls" (p.3). Using another analogy, Garbarino (1982) suggested that the ecological perspective on human development can be seen as offering "a kind of map for steering a course of study and intervention" (p.25).

The potential impact of this awareness of the environment on the course of contemporary developmental research, career guidance policy and career development intervention is significant.

A microsystem represents one of a person's immediate settings, and includes the network of activities, roles and interpersonal relationships associated with that setting. For the adolescent, microsystems include home, school and local community, in which the young person participates as child, student and citizen. For the purpose of one-dimensional presentation, if the school system (microsystem) is viewed as a central focus of influence in the adolescent's life, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem can be visualised as concentric circles surrounding the school.

The mesosystem consists of the network of social systems containing the developing person at a particular point in their life. It comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the adolescent, involving relationships that may conflict with or complement each other. A key mesosystem variable in adolescent career development is the relationship between home and school. Young and Friesen (1986) report an incident where a Grade 3 female student wanted to play drums in a school band. The teacher objected on the grounds that girls did not play the drums; his opinion provoking her to confer with her parents. When their advice that she take a defiant stand on her own proved unsuccessful, the parents themselves consulted with the teacher and the principal, establishing a link between the two microsystems that not only enabled

the girl to achieve the goal but also to participate in an extended ecological field of action. Importantly, the parents viewed this incident as relevant to and important for the child's career development.

The 'outermost' structure in Bronfenbrenner's framework is the macrosystem. The macrosystem differs from the preceding forms in that it refers to 'invisible', abstract prototypes, such as a culture's value system, that set the pattern for structure and activities. Bronfenbrenner (1979) defines the macrosystem as "the consistency observed within a given culture or subculture in the form and content of its constituent micro-, meso- and exosystems, as well as any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies" (p. 258). The macrosystem is, in effect, the overarching 'blueprint' of cultures and subcultures. In this case there are cultural norms and societal influences that interact to affect the pattern of adolescent career development. An example in the New Zealand context is the introduction of market principles in recent educational reform, which reflects the broader sociopolitical trend toward a market-driven economy, and, as education policy discussion documents in this area have described, a conceptual move from social dependability to individual responsibility (e.g. Ministry of Education, 1993a).

The exosystem, is the 'visible' or 'concrete' representation of macrosystem characteristics. These 'manifestations' of the macrosystem embrace specific social structures that do not themselves contain the developing person but "in which events occur that affect what happens in the person's environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, pp.7-8). The Ministry of Education, whose policies impact on adolescents' post-school pathways but with whom these young people typically have no interaction, is one such example. An illustration is the introduction of the youth income support strategy (Study Right), offering financial incentives for young people to stay in the education and training system, and analogous 'disincentives' for following alternate pathways. Recent examples include the abolition of the unemployment, sickness and Domestic Purposes benefits for under-18 year olds and the corresponding availability of student allowances for young people staying at school or moving on to post-school education and training. In September of 1997 the Minister for Education, Wyatt Creech (1997) announced an increase in Family Support payments for parents of 16 and 17 year olds, with the expressed intention of encouraging low income families to keep young people in school beyond the compulsory leaving age (i.e., 16 years of age). In the same media release, Creech (1997) explained that as from

January 1, 1998, all 16 and 17 year old students in New Zealand would only be able to receive state income support if they were legally married, in a defacto relationship with dependent children, or eligible for an independent circumstances allowance (a living allowance for young people estranged from their families).

The concept of interconnectedness applies both within and between systems, and it is such a central part of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) conceptualisation that he goes so far as to acknowledge that his theory is "a theory of environmental interconnections and their impact on the forces directly affecting psychological growth" (p.8). The assumption is that key developmental phenomena occur at multiple, interrelated levels of analysis and that development, likewise, is understood only by examining the interaction among the various levels as they impact on the person's developmental trajectory. Such a view is particularly relevant to this research because it is stressed that multiple contexts contribute to adolescent career development.

As stated, this thesis is undertaken with an intention of contributing an informed perspective for the development of national policy for career services in secondary schools. A model of the systems and elements that are presumed to be operating is shown in Figure 2.1. The contextual elements that provide the specific focus for the conceptual synthesis are represented in the outer circle, although links with the school environment, the family system and, to a lesser extent, the young person's peer group associations, community involvements and part time work experiences are alluded to also. The focus of the empirical study is represented by the shaded area capturing adolescent career development characteristics and the school environment.

As suggested by the ecological illustration in Figure 2.1, the focus of the analysis is the adolescent's career development in the context of the various settings and processes in which the young person has developed and is developing. With this in mind, the ecological target is the young person's microsystem experiences within the school setting. The mesosystem consists of the linkages between this system and other systems in the young person's experience, namely, family dynamics, peer group and other social influences, and, most primary, the 'inner world' of the young person, all of which capture the combination of developmental characteristics and needs. The exosystem is represented by policy and practice elements of the educational and occupational systems in which New Zealand adolescents are embedded. Macrosystem variables include educational values and

philosophy, which mirror wider historical, social and economic values of New Zealand society, and that affect the provision of career information, guidance, counselling and education services in secondary schools.

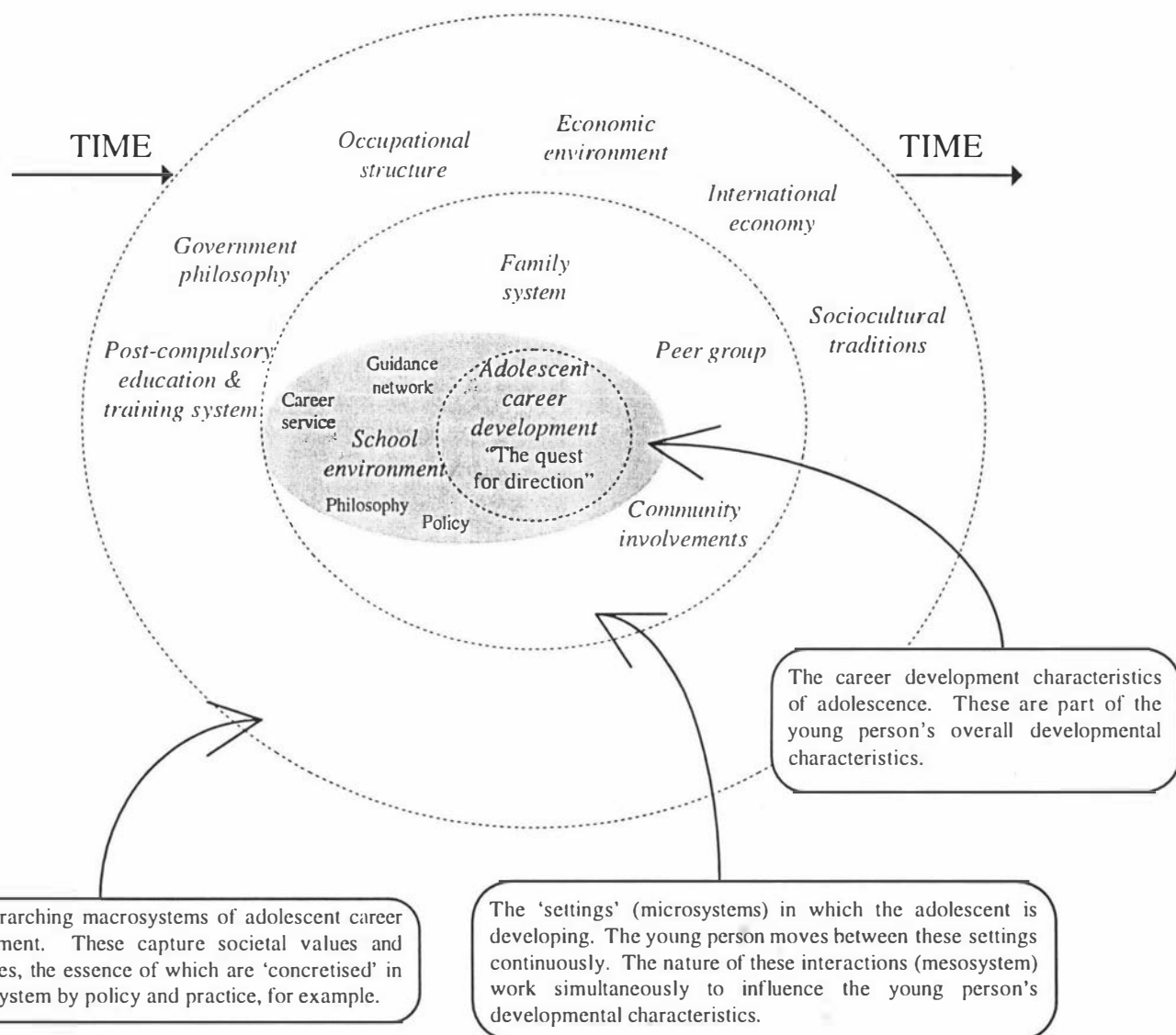


Figure 2.1
The ecology of adolescent career development in New Zealand

2.2.2 *Subjective Meaning of Experience*

A second feature of an ecological framework is its 'unorthodox' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) view of development:

Development is defined as a person's evolving conception of the ecological environment, and his [sic] relation to it, as well as the person's growing capacity to discover, sustain, or alter its properties (p.9).

The emphasis that is placed on the way the environment is perceived, and the meaning it has for the developing person, appears to have had much less impact on career development research than perhaps it deserves. In Part One of his book, 'The Ecology of Human Development', Bronfenbrenner (1979) stresses this point in relation to social science research generally, no fewer than 20 times. Two quotations will illustrate the degree of importance he attributes to this:

Very few of the external influences significantly affecting human behaviour and development can be described solely in terms of objective physical conditions and events; the aspects of the environment that are most powerful in shaping the course of psychological growth are overwhelmingly those that have meaning to the person in a given situation (p.22).

This means that it becomes not only desirable but essential to take into account in every scientific inquiry about human behaviour and development how the research situation was perceived and interpreted by the subjects of the study (p.30).

Clearly, an ecological approach to human development assumes profound implications for the carrying out of career development research. In the empirical study comprising Part Three of this thesis, it is the perceptions of school staff, parents' and students' in relation to the school's career guidance service (the service as perceived rather than as it may exist in 'objective' reality), that will be the focus of analysis.

2.2.3 *Ecological Transition*

A third concept in Bronfenbrenner's model deserves special mention because it is particularly germane to adolescent career development. The concept is referred to by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as 'ecological transition'. He describes this as occurring "whenever a person's position in the ecological environment is altered as the result of a change in role, setting, or both" (p.26).

An ecological transition can thus be seen as occurring during the process of movement from dependent school life in adolescence to independent post-school life, representing change within the adolescent and change within their environment, but also, the mutual accommodation between the young person and the environment in which they live. Bronfenbrenner (1979) stresses that ecological transitions constitute “both a consequence and an instigator of developmental processes” (p.27). Hence, the developmental implication of the process for the young people targeted in this thesis. The degree to which secondary school seniors are in a position to cope with changes in the movement from school to post-school life affects the quality of development that emerges from this transition experience.

The concept of ecological transitions and the implications for immediate and future development of young people highlights the importance of the pre-transition environment and young people’s position within it. It is this pre-transition environment, namely the school career education and guidance service, the young person’s position within this environment and their level of career development, that provides the focus for the empirical study.

2.3 Developmental Contextualism

The application of an ecological perspective in career development was first articulated by Lerner and Lerner (1983) and developed by Vondracek, Lerner and Schulenberg (1986) to encourage awareness amongst developmental psychologists and human developmentalists of the centrality of the career development process in human development. They introduced the concept of developmental contextualism to complement Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) emphasis on the context of development giving an emphasis on development in context. In doing so, the authors stress the importance of understanding the individual’s role in shaping the context as much as understanding the role of the context in shaping the individual. In the words of Vondracek, et al (1986):

The organism in developmental contextualism is not merely the host of the elements of a simplistic environment. Instead, the organism is itself a qualitatively distinct level within the multiple, dynamically interacting levels forming the context of life. As such, the organism has a distinct influence on the multilevel context that is influencing the organism. As a consequence the organism is, in short, not a host, but an active contributor to its own development (pp.33-34).

The developmental contextual approach has been associated with a “distinguishable shift in thinking among career developmental theorists toward adopting more of the transactional world view and its assumptions” (Jepsen, 1990, pp. 146-147). It offers the possibility of integrating developmental perspectives with other perspectives that view various features of the context as critical in the determination of career behaviour and development. This view, that career development is an outcome of the dynamic interaction between the developing person and the ever-changing context, is a reflection of the evolution in life-span developmental psychology (cf. Peterson, 1996) generally, but a timely move for conceptualising career development in particular. This situation was well articulated by Super (1981) in an earlier endorsement of comprehensiveness and complexity in the approach to careers:

Theorists still tend to focus, perhaps legitimately in view of the size of their problem, on segmented theories. Each is thus generally considered to neglect other aspects of theory, other aspects of career development, and career behaviour. Those who do seek to encompass more suffer from the appearance of superficiality. But some day global theories of career development will be made up of refined, validated, and well assembled segments, cemented together by some synthesising theory to constitute a whole that will be more powerful than the sum of its parts (p. 39).

The value of a developmental contextual framework for approaching the process of career development during adolescence is the simultaneous focus on both the developing adolescent and the various changing contexts surrounding the young person. The framework is a considerable advance on conventional models of understanding and researching adolescent career development in New Zealand. Whilst several studies have explored the young person’s contribution to their own career development (e.g., Bethune & Ballard, 1985; Bloor, 1992; Hesketh, 1980, 1982), the traditional unidirectional paradigm, sets forth an image of the school as a static instrument of the state that acts upon compliant individuals to reproduce unequal structures in society (Abigail, 1983; Gordon, 1989; Khan, 1986; Korndorffer, 1987; Nash, 1981). An ecological approach challenges this view of the role of school and adolescent. It calls for a conception of secondary school students as active and responsible participants in their own career development, and an image of schools as dynamic, fluid organisations that mirror the wider historical, social and economic environment within which they are embedded. The insistence on a dynamic interactionist perspective thus overcomes the inordinate focus of

the conventional model on young people's environments and the accompanying emphasis on a unidirectional relationship in their career behaviour. As a corollary, neither young people nor schools alone are a focus for change. Change comes from the simultaneous consideration of young people's changing career development needs with the capacity and limitations of secondary school environments.

PART 2

Ecological dimensions of Career Development for young people in New Zealand

A Conceptual Synthesis

3

The Big Picture

3.1 Introduction

This chapter offers an ecological analysis of the overarching macrosystems of career development in New Zealand and the exosystem expression of these in the four broad areas of the country's (i) economy, (ii) polity, (iii) occupational infrastructure, and (iv) education and training system, alongside related areas of sociocultural traditions and international economy. Together, they constitute dimensions of the dark shaded 'outer circle' in Figure 3.1. A premise of this chapter is that advances in the provision of school-based career services depend partly on a systematic understanding of the ecological context in which this provision has emerged and exists. Consequently, the discussions herein adopt an historical perspective, with most topics being explored within the chronological period from World War II to the present, although at times it has been necessary to examine important developments that occurred earlier this century also.

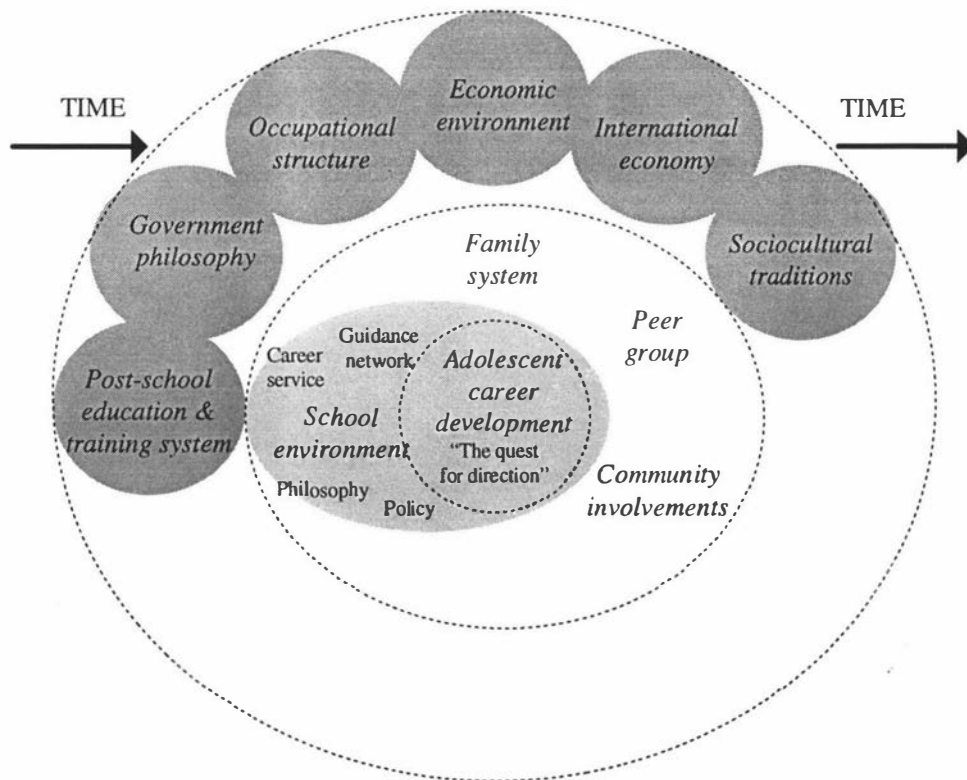


Figure 3.1
Macrosystem and exosystem features of
adolescent career development in NZ

The analysis commences with the country's economic infrastructure, the essence of which reflects changing needs in human resource development. Associated changes in the role of the State are then explored alongside changes in the accompanying philosophical orientation of policy formulation, the nature of which exert considerable influence on career development initiatives in this country. These have been particularly profound in relation to the nation's education and training system in recent years. The nature of this system is then examined, before moving on to trace emergent policy initiatives which recognise a greater role for career guidance services in the post-reform era. These initiatives will be discussed more fully in the following chapter which explores the development and nature of career guidance services in the country's secondary schools.

3.2 The New Zealand Economy

New Zealand is a relatively small advanced capitalist trading nation. From the time of European settlement in the mid-nineteenth century until the late 1960s, the nation functioned as something of an offshore farm for Britain. An extensive supply of temperate pastoral land, together with its small population, enabled the nation to export large quantities of pastoral products in exchange for the goods and services which made for an internationally comparable high standard of living (Raynor & Lattimore, 1991). A protected economy was adopted as a means of fostering manufacturing development and employment, and maintaining external balance. The dominance of agricultural commodity exporting coupled with import controls led to the demand for a predominantly semi-skilled human resource base capturing assembly and processing skills (New Zealand Planning Council, 1989). It also led to a low demand for professional and managerial personnel. In this context, early New Zealand was able to maintain high per capita incomes and full employment despite a relatively undeveloped skill base. In his analysis of the country's involvement in the international economy, Wooding (1993) claimed it was likely that the nation had close to the highest material standard of living in the world during the first half of the twentieth century. This was particularly evident during commodity booms such as that which occurred during the Korean war in 1950-51:

Helped by the wool boom generated by the Korean War, New Zealand gained a level of income per capita close behind the United States and Canada in 1950 (Wooding, 1993, p.93).

The international context began to change toward the close of the 1960s. The changes had a considerable effect on New Zealand's economic infrastructure and in the related area of human resource development needs. Surpluses generated by the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Economic Community (EEC), coupled with Britain's entry into the EEC in 1973 (Hawke, 1985), exposed the vulnerability of New Zealand's traditional reliance on a narrow range of agricultural exports (Roper, 1993a). The combined impact on the country's economy of the 1973-74 oil shock and the collapse of the commodity price boom of earlier decades was dramatic, as import prices rose relative to export prices and the terms of trade (the quantity of imports a given quantity of exports will buy) fell (Gould, 1982). Consequently, Roper (1993a) aptly referred to this period as 'the end of the golden weather' in his discussion of the country's post-war economic history. The world recession of 1974 can be seen as the crucial turning point for changes in the direction of New Zealand's economy, separating as it did "an epoch of unprecedented growth and prosperity from an epoch of stagnation, declining incomes, and rising unemployment" (Roper, 1993a, p.1). Roper was careful to point out that this change paralleled the post-1973 trends of all advanced capitalist societies.

The 'oil shocks' in particular resulted in an enormous redistribution of wealth and income from importing countries to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). A consequence of this was that the cost of manufactured goods increased followed by a contraction in the size of markets. This contributed to the 'slowing down' (Wooding, 1993) of the international economy. Although unemployment and inflation, two of the key indicators of economic performance, had been experienced by countries in varying degrees during the 1960s, the exogenous shocks of the 1970s, such as stagflation and the increased price of oil exacerbated existing conditions and precipitated a crisis internationally. As explained by Gamble (1986), changing world circumstances provided an opportunity in politics "for both practical and ideological intervention" (p.31).

Following this 'end of the golden weather', capitalist economies looked for new policies and the political agenda was open to new ideas. This was manifest in New Zealand by a shift in the underlying analytical framework for policy-making, a shift which was to have an enormous impact on the role of post-compulsory education and training, and on the nature of resulting career development policy initiatives. The character of this policy shift and the implications for the country's human resource development is the focus of the next section. The present section continues with a discussion of the 'new' economic environment, an environment within which young New Zealanders are embedded and to which career development policy needs to be responsive.

3.2.1 The Changing Economy

The essence of the 'new' economic environment was captured in the New Zealand Planning Council's publication, 'Tomorrow's Skills' (Haines & Callister, 1989). The report has since become a key reference document in the restructuring of post-compulsory education and training in this country. It detailed the changes occurring in the country's economic environment, and stressed the necessity, educationally as well as economically, for New Zealanders to adapt to them. It discussed the need to upgrade skills across the entire economy and identified potential growth areas in the occupational structure and the types of skills required to ensure that growth did occur. The New Zealand education system was implicated in the process, and in the conclusion of the report Haines and Callister asserted that "it is in everyone's interest that 'tomorrow's schools' produce tomorrow's skills" (p.25).

At the core of Haines and Callister's report is a picture of an economy that is now quite different from the past, with the most obvious change being increased exposure to the emergent global marketplace. The long-standing basis of previous New Zealand economic policy had been to protect local production and employment by isolating the domestic economy from overseas changes (Hawke, 1987). A change in policy direction, which followed the election of the fourth Labour Government in 1984, encouraged the emergence of an economy more closely linked to international competition, trends and developments. According to Haines and Callister (1989), the New Zealand economy could no longer rely on traditional markets for the bulk of its

agricultural products, and primary products and manufacturing were no longer the major export earners. The decline of traditional markets in Britain coincided with growth and development in Pacific and Asian markets.

3.2.2 Changing Employment Patterns

These changes in the economy are reflected in changing employment opportunities. In a separate report, Haines (1989) noted that two major trends have emerged in the New Zealand economy. These are the growth of the service sector, which is in line with overseas economic trends (cf., OECD, 1990; Reich, 1991), and the demand for more highly skilled workers.

The changed international context, and the reforms imposed in response to these changes, have had an incredible impact on human resource development needs. As many workers throughout New Zealand have discovered, formerly stable employment opportunities have undergone rapid changes, with the most visible signs being structural unemployment and a constricting job market. This has been particularly evident amongst the young, the unskilled and ethnic minorities (Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994).

It is, as Handy (1991) reasoned, the era of the 'Shamrock organisation', the Shamrock being the three-leaved clover-like plant which is Ireland's national emblem. By analogy, Handy (1991) viewed the world of work as comprising three distinct groups, or, leaves. The first is what Handy referred to as the professional core, the 'essential' people, made up of qualified professionals, technicians and managers. They are the smallest yet the most powerful group:

Between them they own the organisational knowledge which distinguishes that organisation from its counterparts. Lose them and you lose some of yourself. They are, therefore, precious or should be, and hard to replace. Organisations increasingly bind them to themselves with hoops of gold, with high salaries, fringe benefits and German cars. In return the organisation demands of them hard work and long hours, commitment and flexibility. Not for these people are there still 40-hour weeks and 45-week years - few take all their holiday entitlements, few see their houses or their families in daylight. They are expected to go there, do this, be that, as the organisation requires. In return they are increasingly well-paid (Handy, 1991, pp.72-73).

The second leaf of the workforce Handy (1991) identified as the 'contract workers', the 'specialists' in 'non-essential' work within the organisation, who therefore "do it better for less cost" (p.73). Handy estimated that about 80% of an organisation's was probably carried out by people outside the organisation:

It can get exotic: smart Londoners can now get their typing done more cheaply and as quickly in Taiwan as in London using the new communications technology, while the New York Insurance Company has located its New Jersey claims office in Casteisland in Co. Kerry, Ireland, where the people are clever but also cheaper than in New Jersey (Handy, 1991, p.74).

The third leaf of the Shamrock is the flexible labour force, "all those part time workers and temporary workers who are the fastest growing part of the employment scene" (Handy, 1991, p.74). This, according to Handy, was a natural part of the 'switch' to a service-based industry. In New Zealand, this 'switch' has been well documented (Haines & Callister, 1989; New Zealand Planning Council, 1989; Smith, 1993a). In a report published by Statistics New Zealand, Smith (1993a) identified one of the country's main employment trends in the past 30 years as the growth of people in part-time and casual work. In 1961 it accounted for five percent of all paid work. By 1991 it had increased to 18 percent of the paid labour force, a trend that Smith (1993a) described as being 'fuelled' by the expansion of the service sector which "employs two out of every three workers" in the country (p.17). Alongside an increasing part-time labour force, the report documented an emergent trend toward a preference for short-term contract work. Other forms of flexible working, such as casual and temporary contracts, flexitime, shiftwork and job sharing have grown in tandem with the ongoing 'pruning' of permanent, full-time posts (Smith, 1993a).

3.2.3 The Nature of Work

At the same time, the nature of the actual work force has changed in a number of ways. Rapid and comprehensive technological developments demand both higher level and broader ranges of skills. Alongside these 'visible' changes have been the changes in attitude. For Handy (1991) these are evident in the language we now use at work:

Organisations used to be perceived as gigantic pieces of engineering, with largely interchangeable human parts. We talked of their structures and their systems, of inputs and outputs, of control devices and of managing them, as if the whole was one large factory. Today the language is not that of engineering but of politics, with talk of cultures and networks, of teams and coalitions, of influence or power rather than control, of leadership not management (Handy, 1991, p.71).

Many of the changes in the nature of work have been captured in a survey of the New Zealand financial service sector (MacPherson, 1990), which also reflected the emergence of the 'Shamrock' organisation. In her survey, MacPherson discovered that the pressures of technological change and international competition had resulted in major skill, organisational and labour force adjustments. Such adjustments included:

- (i) the virtual elimination of low-skilled, low-level staff through the computerisation of routine, repetitive manual tasks;
- (ii) an increase in the level of formal, preparatory education required for entry level positions, due to increased levels of cognitive skills and responsibility demanded of staff;
- (iii) expansion of the tasks of middle management. Where this group formerly performed distinct tasks on an individual basis under close supervision, they were now required to work together, share information and take initiatives;
- (iv) movement towards a multi-entry point recruitment system as an alternative to internal promotion;
- (v) the shortening of hierarchical lines. The emphasis on an educated staff, capable of self-management had lessened the need for supervisors or assistant managers; and
- (vi) increased use of part-time or contract workers to cope with, for example, periodic fluctuations in the demand for services.

3.2.4 Links to Personal Development

Many of these characteristics mirror those throughout the Western world (OECD, 1990). Taken together, changes in the occupational structure and resulting employment patterns have introduced a discernible sense of uncertainty in human resource development across the entire occupational spectrum. The implications of these changes have created an analogous impact on personal career development. The

stable sense of self which accompanied the one-track career pattern of previous generations is now likely to be compromised by the need to engage in career exploration and decision-making throughout adult life (Marshall & Tucker, 1992). Likewise, many individuals are faced with the task of developing new careers in adulthood, as their skills and training become outmoded or their job prospects disappear.

It is within this context that current career development policy for youth has emerged. Policy is formulated with particular purported desirable outcomes, such as an internationally competitive economy and self-confident and resourceful people to cope with that. It incorporates values and philosophies which are part of its context. It is to the nature of this context that the discussion now turns, the intention being to describe the historical antecedents which have led to recent educational reform and thus, to an environment in which career guidance services in secondary schools have been recognised as key instruments in linking education to the economy.

3.3 The Nature of the State in New Zealand

One essential ingredient in understanding the nature of educational policy, including that of career development policy in New Zealand, is understanding the essence of the State. New Zealand had been regarded as a 'welfare state' for much of this century (Oliver, 1987), but more recently, the concept of welfare has changed from one encompassing the social democratic philosophy of universal state provision, captured by Keynesian politics, to the 'safety net' model of New Right neoclassicism, where the State adopts a minimalist approach and considers itself responsible only for the 'deserving poor' (Wilkes, 1993).

An awareness of these developments is important in examining an ecological map of adolescent career development in New Zealand. Recent reforms in the nation's education and training mirror this policy shift which, in turn, has challenged the traditional ethos around the character and role of human resource development. Such change is evident in the language used in accompanying policy documents: an emphasis on reducing 'dependence on the State', increasing 'personal responsibility' (Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b) and the need for individual's to be 'self-steering' (Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995). The following discussion examines

the nature of the State in New Zealand during the post-war period. A primary aim is to identify its changing role in the formulation of public policy, the forum through which educational policy, and that of career development in particular, is generated.

3.3.1 Era of the Welfare State

The social democratic model of the State developed in New Zealand during the years following World War II (Wilkes, 1993). The State's responsibility to its citizens during this period was essentially captured by three assumptions (Davidson, 1989), which, importantly, then provided the 'mindset' for expectations of the State in ensuing years. First, citizens were viewed as having a social right to an adequate standard of income, nutrition, health, housing and education. Second, as a consequence, the right to State assistance was given on the basis of citizenship. Third, the State provided the means for establishing an adequate standard of living for its citizens "through extraction (taxation or levies) and disbursement or expenditure, or by allocating such costs and benefits to other groups through legislation" (Davidson, 1989, p.11).

3.3.2 The Role of Government

The government is perhaps the most visible 'face' of the State, yet, as Dale (1982) pointed out, it is not the whole of the State, in as much as the State is able to keep functioning in the absence of, or during a change, of governments. Rather, the role of government is to "mediate the State and its subjects to each other" (p.139). This is achieved through organisational bureaucracy and the judiciary.

It was such mediation, with the coming of power of the first Labour Government in 1935, which produced a series of social and economic strategies aimed at bringing universalism (assistance for all) to New Zealand. The Social Security Act of 1938 increased pensions, introduced a national health service and added to the family allowance, which became universal in 1946. In 1939, expenditure from the Public Works Fund was five times that in 1935 (Rudd, 1993). Barriers to benefits which indigenous Maori had long suffered were removed, State education to age 19 years for all New Zealand citizens and low cost loans to buy state housing were made available. The implementation of a 'full employment' policy was possible with buoyant

markets and a strongly growing economy. Thus, the State aimed to achieve economic equity through “universality, homogeneity and consistency” (Wilkes, 1993, p.203).

Oliver (1987) suggested that the social policies established in the 1930s and 1940s “created an expectation that governments [would] intervene to prevent distress and promote well being” (p.31). Education was seen as a basic human right, as the ‘equaliser’ through which self development and social mobility were possible for anyone who wished to take advantage of the opportunities offered to them (Renwick, 1986). Accordingly, education policy was conveyed in liberal, humanist terms of ‘equality of opportunity’, a value clearly demonstrated by the Labour Government with the abolition of the Proficiency Examination in 1936, thus opening the way for universal secondary schooling. The ‘democratic’ approach in post-compulsory education was consolidated in the Thomas Report of 1944 (cited in Department of Education, 1959), which argued for a “generous and well-balanced education” (p.5).

Such an education would aim, firstly, at the full preparation of the adolescent as a person; and, secondly, at preparing him [sic] for an active place in our New Zealand society as a worker, neighbour, home maker and citizen. Up to a point one aim implies the other; and such qualities as strength and stability of character are fundamental to both (Department of Education, 1959; p.5).

Whilst the democratic view described the New Zealand situation in the ensuing decades, the onset of the prolonged economic crisis in the mid-1970s ‘forced’ the State to become much more actively concerned with facilitating the process of generating capital. Mulgan (1989) explained this as an ongoing and dynamic process of the State, the character of which was reflective of historic and worldwide trends. In New Zealand business associations were particularly influential:

Business associations have an inherent structural advantage..... because the state is structurally limited and constrained by its fiscal dependence on revenue derived from the taxation of incomes generated in the process of capital accumulation - a process which the state cannot itself directly control in a private enterprise economy - every occupant of state power is basically interested in promoting those conditions most conducive to accumulation (Roper, 1993b, p.150).

The more active stance toward capital accumulation created something of an ideological crisis for the State, which in turn manifested itself in a paradigm shift in policy-making from social democratic Keynesian to New Right neoclassicism; from an emphasis on State dependency to personal responsibility.

3.3.3 Emerging New Right Neoclassicism

Although the aim of economic equity continued to be articulated throughout the 1950s and 1960s, little was done to expand the State during this time, and in real terms, spending only just increased in line with the growth in GDP (Rudd, 1993). However, in the 1970s, there was a significant increase in welfare spending. Rudd suggested that this was in response to demographic changes in an ageing population and economic need due to unemployment. Nonetheless, the introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit, a benefit for solo parents (primarily women), and an accident compensation scheme were innovations that were to absorb a large portion of welfare spending. The universal superannuation scheme, with a generous pension for all those over 60 years of age was to become the single largest welfare vote of government expenditure.

The number of people out of work began to climb steadily from the mid 1970s, and this also contributed to growing welfare expenditure. Rising unemployment was to be a key factor in the restructuring of the State; a process which began with the fourth Labour Government in 1984. As Roper (1993a) pointed out:

At the same time that rising unemployment dramatically increases the demands of State expenditure, the decline in the growth of national income places pressure on the increased taxation revenue required to fund the extra welfare spending. For this reason, the economic crisis soon generates a fiscal crisis of the State. Crisis management then becomes the central preoccupation of policy-making. The State is compelled to introduce policies aimed at restoring the conditions for profitable capital accumulation (p.22).

The years leading up to 'the end of the golden weather' also witnessed a significant transformation in the social fabric of New Zealand society (Olssen, 1981). This has important links to our understanding of the New Zealand adolescent's development and, especially, development in the career realm. The many changes that took place during this era reflect the values with which youth of this country are now

being raised. An increase in class-conflict from the late 1960s raised doubt around the belief in an egalitarian society, whilst an increasingly influential feminist movement challenged the 'cult of domesticity' (Olssen, 1981), a process exacerbated by a series of key issues around autonomy. The Contraception, Sterilization and Abortion Act of 1977 captured a central focus, women's struggle for reproductive autonomy. Similarly, the Federation of Labour made an historic move when it endorsed a working women's charter in the early 1980s (Rudd, 1993), thus giving institutional backing to equal pay for women. In addition, concern around Maori issues of land, culture and language increased, and exploded into the public arena with the Maori Land March of 1975. When the fourth Labour Government came to power in 1984, social and economic indicators led to an acceptance by the population generally that the State was at a point of crisis. The 1984 election effectively marked a turning of the tide in public policy management. Wilkes (1993) empathised with this change in policy management, and described it as an inevitable and necessary move both nationally and internationally:

The fourth Labour Government was confronted with the failure of orthodox methods of capital accumulation, a crisis in State fiscal budgeting, and the need to restructure the economy in line with shifts in global markets (p.205).

In step with most other Western nations, New Zealand began a major shift in economic policy toward an outward-oriented growth strategy. The long-standing basis of previous economic policy (designed to protect local production and employment by isolating the domestic economy from overseas changes) was challenged by this shift. Macroeconomic policies concentrated on fiscal balance and price stability as the principal medium-term strategies. At the same time, the Labour Government worked through an extensive agenda of microeconomic reforms designed to allow the price system to emerge as the dominant signal for investment, production and consumption decisions.

3.3.4 Changing Expectations of Government

The 'market' was to become the organising principle of State policy during this period (Wilkes, 1993). The fourth Labour Government, elected in July 1984, fully embraced New Right neoclassicism and this has remained the dominant analytical framework for policy formulation, being extended rather than abandoned by the fourth National Government. Whilst earlier times emphasised universality and community, the period from 1984 onwards was based on the premise that a free market that responded to individual self-interest and that maximised freedom of individual choice was the most efficient way to accumulate profit. Interference and regulation by the State is seen to be antithetical to the efficiency of the market. Therefore, a minimum of State bureaucracy and expenditure was considered desirable within a free market economy.

Within the last decade, the role of the State as 'minimalist' in the process of capital accumulation has crystallised. This position is clearly evident in the sphere of post-compulsory education and training, as the following section will show. Nevertheless, it is a role which is not unilateral. Through the dynamics of citizen-State relations, it is dialectic and contestable. In seeking to create optimal conditions for the generation of capital, education and training systems continue to play a vital role. As Stevens (1993) noted:

Government reports and research publications have, since the publication of 'Key to Prosperity', told the same story: investment in education, particularly education of a vocational nature, is linked with economic growth and ultimately to prosperity. The challenge for successive New Zealand governments is to find appropriate ways of realising this goal (p.176).

This section has explored the post-war characteristics of the State in New Zealand and examined the way in which the relationships between the State and its citizens altered to meet changing economic and social circumstances. The following section develops related changes in the country's post-compulsory education and training sector, a sector which it is argued has much to contribute to the country's economic development through the enhancement of career opportunities and life choices for its citizens.

3.4 Education and Training in New Zealand

New Zealand's post-compulsory education and training provisions were shaped within the ideological confines of Keynesian politics in the post-war economic and social environment. Since the mid-1980s it has been increasingly obvious that this key developer of human resources had not been responding adequately to the demands of the changing environment.

3.4.1 A System Down-Under

By the late 1980s the government was giving out strong messages that all young people should stay in education and training for longer periods, with the campaigns 'Back to School', in 1988, 'Back to the Future', 1989, and 'Options', during 1990. This message was backed by evidence (e.g., Haines & Callister, 1989; New Zealand Planning Council, 1989; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1990) that New Zealand was in need of a more highly skilled workforce to match actual and predicted trends in the evolution of the global economy.

In their report, Haines and Callister (1989) drew attention to the country's low post-compulsory education participation rates, relative to other countries in the OECD. Concern was expressed about the 'readiness' of the workforce to cope with change, both individually and collectively. Of the existing workforce at the time of their analysis, almost half lacked any formal school qualification and about 60 percent had no tertiary-level qualification. Linking this to the nation's similarly low economic performance (as measured by Gross Domestic Product per head of population), Haines and Callister argued that New Zealand's existing and future workforce was ill-equipped to meet the demand for a highly skilled and educated labour force.

3.4.2 Links to the Changing Economy

At the same time, an independent report on the labour market outcomes of economic restructuring prepared by the Economic Monitoring Group (New Zealand Planning Council, 1989) pointed out the relationship between unemployment rates and formal qualifications. Amidst historically high rates of unemployment, the report confirmed a considerably higher rate of unemployment amongst those in the labour force with no or minimal formal qualifications, in contrast to those with higher

academic attainment. The Economic Monitoring Group also drew attention to the ethnic characteristics of the unemployed and came to the conclusion that whilst educational attainment across the labour force was low by international comparison, the educational attainment of Maori and Pacific Island people in particular was even lower. The over-representation of minority groups among the unemployed is a widely documented phenomenon, as is the concern that some segments of minority populations have become marginalised within New Zealand society (Shirley, Easton, Briar & Chatterjee, 1990).

The outward orientation of the New Zealand economy and the pressure to compete with other nations whose work forces were more highly skilled than our own has been seen by successive governments to place increased pressure on the country's education and training system. This system may have been consistent with, and even adequate for, much of the post-war economic and social context. However, a system which produced a majority of unskilled and semi-skilled individuals was considered a liability from the wider perspective of New Zealand's political and social economy (Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994b). What was seen to be required from this standpoint was a human resource development strategy responsive to change and capable of maximising the potential of a wider section of the population. Assessed against changing characteristics of the country's political economy, its education and training systems required intervention on a number of levels.

The first level related to the relatively low participation in post-compulsory education and training. Whilst this reflected the sheltered New Zealand economy and low skill margins sufficient in previous generations, neither incentive nor ready access to further education and training was being provided. The traditional system was considered to have limited points of access to education and training (Gordon, 1989; Khan, 1986), a characteristic acknowledged internationally in a condemning report published by the OECD in 1990:

The labour market problems caused - directly or indirectly - by deficiencies in upper-secondary education are often considerable. The basic problem is that there are too few attractive training opportunities for young people who have below average educational achievements (p.30).

The New Zealand system, consistent with its Anglo-Saxon roots, tended not to recognise different learning patterns (Lauder, Hughes & Brown, 1991), which was a major factor in limiting access. This lack of recognition that people learn best at different paces, by different modes and in different locations, was reflected in the types of assessment regimes used. Norm- and time-based assessment procedures did not provide clear information on competencies possessed or on the effectiveness of providers in imparting skills and knowledge. The credentials derived from such conditions meant that portability between different education and training providers was difficult (Treasury, 1987) and gave limited information to prospective employers (New Zealand Planning Council, 1989). Lauder, et al (1991) pointed out that the emphasis on competition, reinforced through the traditional system of examinations, was largely responsible for high levels of failure and a consequent 'wastage of talent'.

The wastage of Maori talent, in particular, has fuelled the need to fulfil the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi by incorporating its principles into charters at all levels of education and training. 'Honouring the Treaty' in these systems means that curricula should reflect a Maori perspective and provide equitable provision for the instructional needs of Maori students. Responding to the Haines and Callister report, Tuhiwai Smith (1991) recognised the changes in the New Zealand economy and the need for an overall plan for Maori education within the system and the need, in particular, for Maori self-confidence in the process:

This requires a positive approach and a schooling system which is open about the possibilities which abound in the world. It also requires [Maori] children to be successful, to feel successful and to believe that they are successful (p.19).

3.4.3 The 'People' Factor

Concern for future New Zealanders was reflected in many of the policy documents which emerged from the mid-1980s (e.g., The Picot Report, 1988; Learning for Life I, 1989; Learning for Life II, 1989). To be effective in achieving a modernised high technology economy (where both human and technological potential would be maximised), these documents argued that the country's human resource development system had to be concerned with more than just selecting people for a

place in the occupational structure; it must also involve the notion of empowering people to take charge of their lives.

State welfare policy also created perverse incentives for young people not to engage in education and training, one such example being the disparity between the unemployment benefit and tertiary education and training allowance. The fact that the unemployment benefit could be uplifted at 16 years of age prompted numbers of young people to 'opt out' of education and training.

Moreover, employers were reluctant to recruit young people (New Zealand Planning Council, 1989) due to a perceived lack of credible information on personal attributes which were seen to be important to performance in the workplace. An apparent gap between the world of learning and the world of earning was signalled in an information booklet entitled 'Education at Work', prepared in 1990 jointly by the Employers' Federation and the Ministry of Education. In their Introduction to the booklet, the Employers' Federation acknowledged:

There are some longstanding barriers to building better school-industry links. Prejudices on both sides need to be broken down so that there may be mutual understanding of each other's needs and expectations.

In turn, the Ministry of Education's separate Introduction stated:

The purpose of this booklet, itself a manifestation of cooperation between education and employers, is to become more involved in the development within schools of the skills they look for in potential employees.

The ACCESS Training Scheme, was set up along similar lines to the Young Person's Training Scheme (YPTS) in Britain (Gordon, 1989). From the mid-1980s, it was the government's main method of integrating into the labour-market those who, for one reason or another, were let down by the traditional formal education and training systems. The lack of national recognition given to skills acquired under ACCESS, together with the highly variable quality of training received (Gordon, 1989), however, meant that this particular initiative was limited in its effectiveness.

New Zealand's traditional means of facilitating the career options and, therefore, the development of its citizens were not well placed to cope with the challenges implicit in the changing economic and social context. This has been recognised by successive recent governments through a series of revolutionary policy

changes. The following section provides a review of these policy responses, and, in doing so, provides some of the policy context for the development of career guidance and information services in secondary education, the characteristics of which are the focus of Chapter Four.

3.5 An Era of Reform

The past decade has seen far-reaching reforms in the country's education and training systems. The intention in implementing these reforms, it has been claimed (e.g., Treasury, 1987), has been to ensure greater accountability to the clients of these systems and to government for results. A further aim has been to decentralise management in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness. As indicated earlier, the previous post-compulsory sector was designed for different times and for different circumstances, and did not provide the necessary framework to meet the nation's needs for the present or future. It was a system characterised by its complexity, and its lack of responsiveness, flexibility, and coordination.

3.5.1 Philosophical Considerations

The Treasury (1987) document 'Government Management, Volume II: Education Issues' captured Treasury's position on education and identified the challenge confronting the fourth Labour Government. The document claimed that a liberal humanist approach to education had not worked in promoting social equity, nor had it been effective in facilitating the capacity of most New Zealanders to participate in, and contribute effectively to, the increasingly technological and competitive economy. The report echoed earlier critiques (e.g., Harker, 1985; Khan, 1986; Nash, 1981) that education in New Zealand had been allegedly captured by the 'white' middle class which was therefore absorbing most of the resources at the expense of other groups in society. In its report, Treasury recommended that the education sector be reorganised in order to provide for more people more effectively. In line with the emergent New Right philosophy, the authors of the report argued that 'excessive' government intervention reduced freedom of choice and weakened the capacity of the individual to be responsible for his or her own development. The neo-liberal discourse evident in the 1987 Treasury Report is significant because it signalled the articulation

of a philosophy which was to become the base for subsequent educational policy reform (Snook, 1991).

For the first three years following its election in 1984, the fourth Labour Government spent much of its energy on reforming macroeconomic policy along Monetarist lines. It was not until its re-election in 1987 that major reform of the country's human resource development sector was initiated. The then Prime Minister, David Lange, who was also responsible for the education portfolio, commissioned the setting up of a Taskforce on educational administration, chaired by Brian Picot, a representative from Treasury. It was no surprise therefore, that the terms of reference of the Taskforce were expressed in distinctive Treasury terms, although at the same time, there was an evident commitment to traditional Labour values of equality in education (Snook, 1991).

3.5.2 The Picot Report

In May 1988, the report of the Taskforce, 'Administering for Excellence' (Picot, 1988), more commonly known as 'The Picot Report', was released. Essentially, it confirmed the limitations of the existing centralised system, drawing attention to the resulting redundancy and incongruity of administration structures, ineffective management processes, and an overall sense of 'powerlessness', 'consumer dissatisfaction' and 'disaffection' as a consequence. The report, virtually unchanged, became government policy with the release of 'Tomorrow's Schools' (Minister of Education, 1988) during the following August. In broad terms, the Picot review endorsed a change of balance between central and local decision-making in education, encouraging schools to be responsive to, and administered by, their communities. Boards of Trustees were proposed, and guidelines provided for self-management and curriculum development in schools. The point of connection between schools and their communities was to be a charter for each school. The Report also advocated dismantling the Department of Education and replacing it with a Ministry of Education, which was to be given responsibility for the development of policy alongside the provision and allocation of resources. A separate review and audit agency (which later became known as the Education Review Office) was to be set up

to monitor the performance of schools and to provide accountability assessments for its various clients.

3.5.3 *'Learning for Life'*

During the same year, 1988, Professor Gary Hawke of the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University was contracted to head a team of consultants for the purpose of bringing together all of the reports on post-compulsory education since 1980, and to develop “a comprehensive framework for a new and simplified system” (Learning for Life II, 1989, p.11), along the lines of that for the compulsory sector. The recommendations of Professor Hawke’s team, provided in the 1988 release ‘Report of the Working Group on Post Compulsory Education and Training’ (‘The Hawke Report’), formed the basis for public comment, consultations and submissions. The recommendations, together with public responses, were brought together in the interim document, ‘Learning for Life I’, which in turn was presented to Cabinet for direction in developing the Government’s tertiary policy. This direction was formalised in the final report, ‘Learning for Life II’, and released in August 1989. In his forward to the report, the then Minister of Education, the Honourable Phil Goff stated:

The changes are designed to improve administration of education, increase its flexibility and responsiveness and ensure the most effective possible use of resources. The aim is to improve access and increase opportunity, develop pathways between institutions and promote quality education and training (Learning for Life II, 1989, p.4).

Broadly, the thrust of reform in the post-compulsory sector was:

That more responsibility for decision making should rest with the institutions, that they will be able to use their resources as they see fit to achieve their agreed objectives, that the broad direction will be through charters and corporate plans and that new procedures will be established to ensure accountability. Charters, corporate plans, bulk funding, transfer of assets and accountability are all interdependent elements of the Learning for Life system (p.30).

Goff closed his forward to the Learning for Life II document with the historically significant statement:

These policy decisions will almost complete the most comprehensive changes across the whole of education since the introduction of compulsory education in 1877 (p.4).

The changes set out in Learning for Life II were passed into legislation through the Education Amendment Act in July of 1990. With the change of Government from Labour to National in November of that year, the New Right agenda in education reform crystallised. The National Party's Education Policy (1990) stated:

We must break the cycle of failure that condemns so many young people to dependence on the State, so that they can fulfil their potential and make their contribution to our nation's future (p.1).

Several policy initiatives designed to reform curriculum, assessment and qualifications were to emerge in the ensuing years, which effectively achieved one of the initial motivations to link post-compulsory education and training to the economy.

3.5.4 The New Zealand Qualifications Authority

The first of these initiatives was the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), established primarily to remedy the existing lack of coherence and accountability through the introduction of a unified, 'across the board' approach to accreditation and qualifications. Under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education, the NZQA was given responsibility for overseeing the setting of standards in relation to qualifications and for the certification of those qualifications. Its terms of reference, set out in the Education Amendment Act of 1990, were to:

- (a) develop a framework within which national qualifications will be able to relate to each other;
- (b) set, monitor and review standards for qualifications;
- (c) establish policies and criteria for the approval of courses leading to nationally recognised awards, and accredit institutions competent to provide such courses [it was envisaged that accreditation would be compulsory for all institutions and providers who wished to receive government funding], and
- (d) ensure that New Zealand qualifications maintain international comparability and are appropriately recognised overseas.

3.5.5 *The National Qualifications Framework*

Official policy for a National Qualifications Framework was released in November of 1991 (O'Rourke & Hood, 1992), following extensive public consultation. The primary 'aim' of the Framework was to "provide pathways that overcome present sector barriers for students" (p.2).

It was to be based on credit-bearing units, the core of which were unit standards consisting of learning outcomes (elements) and performance criteria, which, in turn, were assigned to a level within eight different levels. Standards-based assessment was to be applied in either competency-based or achievement-based form. Unit standards at the first four levels of the Framework would lead to a National Certificate qualification; those from levels five to seven to a National Diploma; and those from levels seven and eight to degrees and higher qualifications.

3.5.6 *The 'Seamless' Education System*

The then Minister of Education, the Honourable Lockwood Smith, introduced the concept of a 'seamless' education system (Smith, 1993b) to describe the variety of pathways to nationally recognised qualifications, thus breaking the monopoly of schools and tertiary institutions:

All education and training will be recognised on the same qualifications framework allowing for greater cross-crediting between institutions and other providers (Smith, 1993b, p.1).

Importantly, the 'seamless' system was to provide greater opportunity for young people to access further education and training by working toward modules within National Certificates whilst still at school; the overall intention being to encourage the philosophy of 'life-long learning'. Thus, in describing the role of the senior school in the new system, the Ministry of Education (1993b) stated:

By the end of the compulsory schooling years, all students will have the beginnings of a tertiary qualification on which to build (p.12).

In accordance with the market-driven philosophy espoused by Treasury, the Framework was to be the instrument through which education would be more responsive to the changing economic environment:

It [the Framework] will establish clear learning pathways and career opportunities towards the development of an appropriately skilled and adaptable population (Ministry of Education, 1993b, p.30).

A further important feature was that the Framework was to combine career and general education units:

It will encompass vocational and academic programmes, recognising that both are required to build a successful society (Ministry of Education, 1993b, p.30).

3.5.7 The New Zealand Curriculum Framework

A public discussion document on the National Curriculum of New Zealand was made available in May 1991. It described, in broad terms, the principles, the essential learning areas, essential skills, the place of attitudes and values and that of assessment procedures for the national school curriculum. The final version, which set out official policy for teaching, learning and assessment was announced in 1993 with the release of 'The New Zealand Curriculum Framework' (Ministry of Education, 1993a). Its intended responsiveness to existing human resource development needs was outlined in the first of nine curriculum principles:

The school curriculum will give all students the opportunity of a broad and balanced education throughout their years of schooling. It will provide them with opportunities to undertake continuing study in the seven essential learning areas, and to develop the essential skills, attitudes, and values. It will provide coherent goals and learning experiences which will enable students to achieve their potential, to continue learning throughout life, and to play their full part in our democratic society and in a competitive world economy (p.6).

Of particular relevance to the career development of students was the identification of work and study skills; one of eight groupings of 'essential skills' which are:

.....expected to be developed by all students across the whole curriculum throughout the years of schooling (Ministry of Education, 1993a, p.17).

Among the objectives for the development of work and study skills was the expectation that students would:

.....make career choices on the basis of realistic information and self-appraisal (p.20).

3.5.8 The Role of Careers Assistance in the New Environment

The concept of a seamless education system together with an emergent New Right persuasion for individuals to take charge of their own learning pathways drew attention to the responsibility of secondary schools to provide adequate support systems for their senior students (i.e., those in Form 5 to Form 7). Career guidance and information services had been a feature of the New Zealand secondary school system for decades (cf., Winterbourne, 1974), but largely as an ancillary service available to those considered 'at risk' of unemployment and typically as a 'quick fix' for students about to leave school.

One implication of the new environment was that secondary schools were now charged with the responsibility of providing for the career development of their students in a more comprehensive, accessible and developmentally appropriate manner (Career Information & Guidance Review Panel, 1995; Minister of Education, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b). Indeed, in a confidential (at the time) discussion paper, on possible future directions for school provision, Renwick (1992), then a Senior Policy Analyst in the Policy Division of the Ministry of Education, acknowledged:

The development of the new qualifications framework provides overall coherence to what has been a complex and confusing situation. However, at the school level, the introduction of units of learning, a greater range of options, multilevel studies, potential greater flexibility in the paths by which specific qualifications can be attained, and the increase in the numbers and

range of accredited providers, will all add to the complexity for students and their families.

Given the current rate of change, it will be essential to have trained personnel who can provide accurate, up-to-date, and neutral information, advice, and guidance to assist students to make appropriate study choices which take account of their personal skills, knowledge, and interests, provide an appropriate base for future education and training opportunities, and which link to employment opportunities. Career and course/academic advisers, together with guidance counsellors, comprise a key element in an integrated, comprehensive transition policy. Their work will play an increasingly important role within schools (p.11).

The nature and evolution of careers assistance in our schools, and the accompanying role of the secondary school system in this provision is the focus of the following chapter.

4

Careers Assistance in New Zealand Secondary Schools

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the evolution of career services in this country's secondary schools. The focus for this task is illustrated by the darker shaded area in Figure 4.1. The discussion traces the nature of career services from nationwide assistance in course and vocational choice in the late 1940s, through ad hoc responses to the growth of youth unemployment during the 1970s. This is followed by a description of its institutionalisation in state-funded policies and programmes under the umbrella of Transition Education in the 1980s. Its current status recognises the need for 'good quality' careers assistance (including career information, career advice, career education and career counselling) as an integral part of the young person's overall secondary school experience. However, there still seems to be quite a way to go to be able to respond at the levels considered necessary.

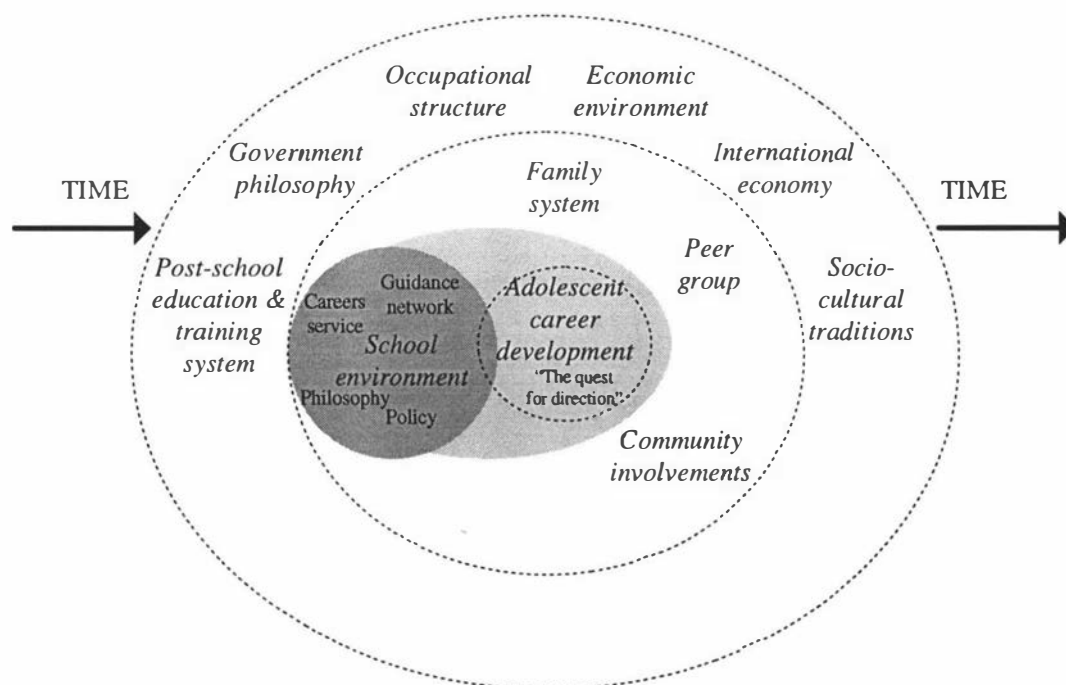


Figure 4.1
The careers service microsystem in
New Zealand secondary schools

4.2 Early Developments

The first official commitment to careers assistance for secondary school students in New Zealand dates back to 1948 when the government approved the appointment of careers advisers to all schools with rolls over 200 (Department of Education, 1971). These were to be teachers, seconded for part of the week to give information and provide advice on the occupational implications for students of their educational decisions. This step followed the recommendations of a special review in 1940, which was to become known as the McQueen Report (cited in Winterbourne, 1974), after the research officer commissioned to carry out the review. Up until this time, careers assistance in schools had been largely characterised by a placement philosophy (i.e., helping students about to leave school to find jobs) and existed in a rather undefined and informal way, with the exception of several careers adviser positions already in place in certain large post-primary schools in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

The McQueen Report endorsed the separation of the functions of careers guidance from vocational placement, with the former being the administrative responsibility of the Department of Education and the latter the Labour Department. As Winterbourne (1974) explained, the careful distinction made between guidance and placement was to set the tone and philosophical orientation of schools in the realm of careers assistance for the ensuing decades. The release of the Thomas Report in 1944, four years after the McQueen Report, with its emphasis on the 'whole' child as the focus in secondary education, consolidated the importance of the school's role in a comprehensive guidance system.

Steps toward such a system were evident toward the end of the 1950s when, on a trial basis, visiting teachers were appointed to some schools to complement the developmental focus of careers advisers with an emphasis on the remedial needs of students. In a second scheme, 'experienced' careers advisers were selected as guidance counsellors in single sex schools, which effectively saw their developmental role in the career realm expanded to include the remedial work piloted by visiting teachers (Department of Education, 1971). The second scheme was extended in 1962, with the first official appointments of guidance counsellors in coeducational schools, having responsibility for the personal needs of students, and a shared role with the

careers adviser in providing for students' educational and vocational needs (Winterbourne, 1974). As Donnelly (1974) pointed out, much of this early work was characterised by a remedial emphasis, with Webb (1980) seeing this as due in part to a perception of the counsellor as a consoler rather than a developmentalist.

Appointments of similar character were to continue through the remainder of the decade and in July of 1969 the country's first official statement of Government policy on a comprehensive guidance network in schools was announced with the release of the Education Department Circular Memorandum B 69/31 (cited in Winterbourne, 1974). This was an historic document for guidance in New Zealand as, in the words of Winterbourne (1974), it finally announced guidance as an "accepted feature of secondary schooling" (p.100). The Memorandum clarified the role of the school guidance counsellor and in doing so assured, at least politically, that the career development needs of students were an integral service and responsibility of all secondary schools. In the realm of careers assistance, the guidance counsellor was to provide educational and vocational counselling, work with the careers adviser in assisting students with educational planning and occupational choice, and liaise with the Vocational Guidance Service to assist with placements.

A national survey of secondary school career education provisions in 1971 (Department of Education, 1971) reinforced the need for career guidance services in schools, with particular emphasis on the provision of comprehensive career education programmes to complement the careers advisers' emphasis on course and career choice and the more specialist role of the newly emergent school guidance counsellors. Of particular concern was an apparent overemphasis on the remedial aspects of guidance at the expense of the developmental, and an apathy with regard to training and coordination of the various elements of the guidance network. Unfortunately, these concerns were to remain a salient character in guidance provision in schools, a trend that Webb (1980), in her account of the history of school-based counselling in this country, attributed to a largely professionally uninformed and often reactive group of people responsible for its development.

Support for a comprehensive approach to careers assistance in secondary schools was urged again in a 1984 review of the core curriculum (Department of Education, 1984). This document advocated:

.....a continuing programme, from Form 3 to 7, which assists students to clarify progressively their career choices. It [the school's career education programme] should be incorporated in many subjects, and the teachers or subjects should be supported by the guidance staff. The career education programme provides a foundation for individual vocational counselling..... (p.67).

This was followed late in 1985 by the release of the draft document 'A Guide to Career Education' (Department of Education, 1985), providing guidelines for the setting up of career education in a school. The booklet, which became known amongst school guidance staff as 'The Gold' (because of the gold coloured cover), was prepared by a number of careers advisers, guidance counsellors and Heads of Departments, in response to an earlier request from the Director of Curriculum Development in the Department of Education. 'The Gold' defined the purpose of career education broadly as:

.....developing the range of knowledge and capacities students need to manage their lives, at school and in the world beyond (p.1).

The booklet also recognised the developmental focus of career education, alluding to student's career development as a life-long process, representing a series of experiences rather than a one-off decision regarding choice of course or direction on leaving school:

Career education recognises.....that students will face a life-long succession of options, decisions and transitions (p.1).

Within this framework, the school's career education programme was to provide:

.....learning activities and experiences which foster the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help students respond in purposeful ways to opportunities and change (p.1).

The recognition of career development as an integral part of the young person's overall development and the consequent need for an integrated service which targeted all levels of the school curriculum, and provided for individual as well as group needs, was inherent in the list of twelve key themes to be included in the school's career education programme. These themes were: (i) building self esteem; (ii)

the nature of the workforce; (iii) decision-making skills; (iv) educational information and (tentative) goal setting; (v) transitions; (vi) interview techniques; (vii) job seeking/application skills; (viii) an individual/small group career counselling programme; (ix) work exploration; (x) managing personal income; (xi) recreational activities; and (xii) community needs.

These themes were incorporated into four broad, inter-related objectives, the influence of the British model (Watts & Herr, 1976) for career education being prevalent. These objectives, described in detail in 'The Gold' (pp.10-11) included emphasis on (i) self-knowledge and personal growth; (ii) decision-making and self direction; (iii) opportunity awareness; and (iv) social and transition skills.

Yet, despite liberal rhetoric supporting the provision of a comprehensive, developmental approach to careers assistance for the young, much of the practice remained 'stand alone' (i.e., outside mainstream curriculum provision) and remedial. Against the backdrop of economic recession and accompanying structural changes in the world of work, the target of careers assistance focused on school leavers considered most 'at risk' of unemployment, a fast developing feature of the economic infrastructure which impacted on New Zealand in quite a dramatic way from the early 1980s.

4.3 The Transition Education Experience

Initially transition programmes were established to cope with 'reluctant returners' and those considered to be 'at risk' of unemployment; usually those seen as 'non-achieving' in the academic realm. Work exploration and social skills training were the bases of these programmes teaching the skills needed by young people to be 'work ready' in habits and attitudes and able to retain a job. The transition teacher had the task of making links between school and local industry to help students move from school to work. The prevailing concern was that the labour market no longer provided jobs for early school leavers (i.e., those leaving school with no formal qualifications) so they were missing the opportunity to mature and gain work skills and accompanying social skills on the job. Schools were now expected to fill this gap.

Youth unemployment was seen as a 'schooling deficiency', with young people leaving school inadequately prepared for work and adult life. This was accompanied by 'blaming the victim', the view that those young people who were unable to get employment possessed inadequacies and deficiencies. As Marshall (1987) observed, looking back now it seems that the country was naive in accepting the political recommendation of the then Minister of Education, that all schools needed to do was to have students spruce up, wear the right clothes and able to answer the right questions to obtain a job. Such an interpretation was not uncommon, however, amongst other Western nations experiencing post-war economic restructuring (cf., Reich, 1991; Roper & Rudd, 1993). The response of schools reflected then, as they do now, the Western world view of the day. In the early 1980s what was happening to the labour market was not generally understood and that incomprehension rendered transition education very vulnerable over the following years.

Indicative of this uncertainty was the resistance of many schools to access the resources that were available to support and promote transition programmes. Principals who were concerned at the plight of many of their school leavers were more likely to support transition developments in their schools (Cuthell, 1986). Schools were now expected to teach different skills to those who might previously have expected to leave school after fourth or fifth form, while still providing an academic education in preparation for those going on to university study.

Many schools did take initiatives to facilitate their students' readiness for life beyond school, and included modifications to the core curriculum, career education (often incorporated into Social Studies and English class syllabi) and work exploration (Norman & Kerslake, 1987). There was much criticism about how schools were functioning, with calls for a return to discipline and traditional values and also for curricula relevant to the workplace (e.g., New Zealand Employers' Federation, 1981). This coincided with the full review of the secondary curriculum, discussed in Section 3.5.

Early in 1983, the Director-General of Education commissioned a working party to consider the structure and balance of the core curriculum, a task which followed on the heels of a similar appraisal in the primary school sector that had been initiated some months earlier at the end of 1982. The outcome of the review was the

discussion document 'A Review of the Core Curriculum for Schools' (Department of Education, 1984). The provision of a comprehensive career education programme, incorporating information, advice, guidance and counselling and reaching individuals and classes at all levels of the curriculum was nominated one of the twelve main targets for the secondary core curriculum (Department of Education, 1984).

The objectives for the programme were drawn from an earlier survey of career education in secondary schools (Department of Education, 1981), which itself drew heavily upon the work of Watts and Herr (1976) in Britain, advocating for provision based on the development of decision-making and transition skills and an understanding of the career opportunities available. Integral to this process was to be an emphasis on the student's self-awareness, that is, in recognising personal needs and building strengths. As with the political intention of careers assistance in earlier decades (e.g., Department of Education, 1971), the need for a comprehensive, developmentally focused programme was acknowledged, and, in the tradition of earlier documentation, never translated into practice. A contributing factor during this time was the demand for government attention to New Zealand's poor economic performance.

The release of the review of the core curriculum coincided with the election of the fourth Labour Government. As was mentioned in Chapter Three, in their first term the Government channelled its energy toward the reform of macro-economic policy. It was to be another three years, following their re-election in 1987, before the Labour Government initiated the micro-economic policy which was to set the scene for reformation of the country's education and training systems, although several review committees were set up to begin the process in the intervening years. In the meantime, school leaver unemployment continued to climb and ad hoc reactive responses to the immediate career development needs of those most 'at risk' of unemployment dominated the character of careers assistance in the schools.

Against this background, the Labour Government initiated a series of major reviews on the education and training needs of young people. In September of 1984, a government-commissioned committee was set up to consider the nature and role of transition education in schools. The terms of reference used by the committee were based on the stance that transition education was concerned with the transition from

school to a constructive adult life, which included direct labour market entry and further education and training pathways. This committee, which was to become known as the Scott Committee, produced their report in the following year (Scott Report, 1985). Among the observations of the committee was that existing provisions for transition education were inadequate. The writers of the report considered that many young people were ill-prepared for the challenges and demands of adult life. They advocated the need for regional input and decentralised control of transition education programmes and much greater coordination and cooperation among providers of education and training.

At the same time, Catherwood (1985) was seconded from the Department of Education by the New Zealand Planning Council to carry out a review that included the education and employment of young people, and their needs.

Both reports became working documents for the Employment Promotion Conference in March of 1985, which in turn fed into a discussion paper on transition education released in July of that same year, representing the views of the Ministers of Employment, Education and Maori Affairs. This paper, entitled 'Skills for Young People' (1985), proposed the framework for a coordinated and coherent system, moving away from the narrow focus of a stand-alone programme for those considered likely to become unemployed towards a more integrated, mainstream activity involving lifeskills, career education courses and closer links between schools and polytechnics. The 'Skills for Young People' team suggested the following elements be included in a school's transition package (Skills for Young People, 1985, pp.9-10):

- (i) development of a life skills programme for all students tailored to their individual needs;
- (ii) a career education component integrated throughout existing subjects in the curriculum;
- (iii) work exploration schemes and the opportunity to explore further vocational education and training;
- (iv) the provision of regular career counselling;
- (v) the development of job-seeking skills for those young people at special risk, and the development of alternative programmes;
- (vi) the provision of linked programmes (including schools and polytechnics).

Developments in the arena of policy mirrored concerns among educational sociologists (e.g., Khan, 1986; Lauder, Khan & McGlinn, 1989). In his critique of programmes during the early 1980s, Khan (1986) challenged the emphasis on ‘at risk’ young people, arguing that the marginalisation of provision was an institutionalised means of social control. Khan supported his argument with reference to the close similarity in demographic characteristics between those considered ‘at risk’ in schools, and those on the periphery of the workforce generally, including those who lacked any formal school qualifications, and more often than not, those from ethnic minorities. He pointed out that, contrary to the aim of equality of opportunity, the provision of transition education in schools had been really just an attempt to perpetuate a segmented labour force. He drew attention to the non-academic bias of the transition initiative and to its low status in the school community, this latter being a theme which has dogged most school guidance-oriented initiatives in this country (cf., Webb, 1990).

Concern was also expressed by Lauder, Khan and McGlinn (1989) in their survey of transition provisions in Canterbury. This report was especially critical of the poor integration of ACCESS with school-based programmes and the acceptance of both providers and participants of a remedial emphasis. The authors also pointed out that the types of post-school training courses and the areas in which skills were being taught were also the very areas in which unemployment rates were highest. From a perspective that such programmes were alternative to the certified route in the post-compulsory education and training system, Lauder, et al (1989) argued that this initial provision “restricted opportunity by creating a credential poverty trap” (p.3).

This, the authors believed, worked to ensure a supply of people into the secondary sector of the labour market, with young people never able to break out of a predictable cycle of unemployment and peripheral work.

In 1986, three secondary schools, Long Bay College, Central Hawkes Bay College and Queens High School piloted the development of a coordinated approach to transition education. In a letter to secondary school principals in December of 1987, the Associate Minister of Education announced that “Transition Programmes should be seen to be part of the curriculum for every student where appropriate, as well as positive assistance to those in special need” (The Education Gazette, 1988b, p.1). Pilot transition programmes in selected schools were to be allocated an estimated

\$2.6 million in the following year, with a further \$13.7 million available to all State secondary schools in 1989. The specific purpose for the additional funding was two-fold. Firstly, to enable schools to develop transition programmes, adapted to local conditions, to meet the needs of their students (and of 'disadvantaged' students in particular); and, secondly, to provide for teaching and ancillary staffing to assist students' career and educational planning, and, towards achieving this purpose, to refurbish some buildings. The general criteria for which such funding was to be allocated involved programmes:

.....developed by schools which feature initiatives for disadvantaged groups and an emphasis on personal development, including the development of initiatives and the ability to face and solve problems (The Education Gazette, 1988b, pp.1-2).

It, therefore, clearly presented the view that transition education was for all students whilst acknowledging that the need of some students was greater than others. Specific guidelines for the types of programmes for which schools could use transition funding included:

- vocational guidance counselling and related assessment;
- broad introductory vocational elements;
- links with further education and training opportunities in the community;
- preparation for the potential and changing employment opportunities;
- planned work exploration and work shadowing;
- preparation for one or more national qualifications;
- alternative programmes including full-time job search.

(The Education Gazette, 1988b, p.2)

In line with the prevailing economic philosophy these resources were contestable, with schools having to submit a case for increased funding. The continuation of funding was dependent upon the achievement of performance criteria, involving higher retention rates in senior forms or increased movement to places of further education or training. Thus, the secondary school experience was no longer considered the main transition stage to employment, but to further education and

training, and the school's transition education programme was a key step in this process.

Transition programmes depended largely on the ability and contacts of each transition teacher, mostly in isolation from each other. Akin to early career adviser positions (cf., Webb, 1980; Winterbourne, 1974) transition teachers worked largely intuitively, from a base of uninformed practice wisdom. The influence of the review of the core curriculum and concern about professionalism led to the emergence of transition teacher associations; the first being regional formed in 1982, with a national association developing in 1986. These associations enabled transition teachers to give support to each other and provided the opportunity to lobby jointly for improvements in transition policy and resourcing.

The first national Transition Conference was held in Christchurch in August of 1986. Three years later, the document 'Working Papers in Transition Education' (Department of Education, 1989a) was released. This document, which represented the collection of experience from members of the national association, set out the guiding principles for in-service training of transition education teachers in secondary schools. The document endeavoured to define transition education:

The focus of Transition Education is to enable students to explore their capabilities, develop the self-awareness, maturity, competencies and information about the range of options within and beyond the secondary school, which are necessary to make informed and appropriate decisions in a society facing technological, economic and social change.....

Transition Education emphasises the need for the focus on the learning process and how learners can be better equipped with the skills to make decisions as individuals or in groups about their present and future needs. It also emphasises the need for skills development and mastery and sees the curriculum as a vehicle for personal development (1989a, p.1).

In the guidelines given to schools in 'Schools in Transition - Strategies for the Future' (Career Development and Transition Education Services, 1990, p.2), it was intended that transition education would:

- (i) foster students' self-awareness and personal development;
- (ii) develop students' knowledge and understanding of social interactions, including community awareness, cultural sensitivity, family and associated responsibilities; and
- (iii) provide a range of opportunities and experiences which will encourage students to make informed choices about their future education, training and employment.

Specific areas for transition courses were not specified, however, the Department of Education (1989a) in its booklet, 'Working Papers in Transition Education', identified eight themes recommended for inclusion in all courses. They were: (i) building self-esteem; (ii) relating to others; (iii) self-management skills; (iv) dealing with everyday life; (v) cultural exploration; (vi) education as a lifelong process; (vii) readiness for career decision-making; and (viii) interaction with the community.

In October of 1989 a manual to complement 'Working Papers', was released, entitled 'A Beginner's Guide to Transition Education' (Department of Education, 1989b). Like its career education predecessor, 'The Gold', 'A Beginner's Guide' was a practical guide, with information and ideas to ".....help develop an effective transition focus within programmes" (1989b, p.i).

The influence of 'The Gold' was pervasive throughout 'Working Papers' and 'A Beginner's Guide'. This latter presented a set of 'topics', accompanied by an exhaustive list of dimensions for Transition Education programmes. They retained, in essence, the four critical objectives for Career Education outlined in 'The Gold', whilst incorporating a number of other changes, most notably the inclusion of cultural (including ethnic, sociopolitical, gender) awareness, interpersonal (covering family, relationships, parenting) skills, and physical education and health. Essentially, Transition Education was being marketed as the umbrella for facilitating all of students' development, excluding that targeted by the traditional academic syllabi.

In practice, considerable variation existed in the approach to transition in schools (Education Review Office, 1991). In some schools, transition education was viewed as an alternative programme appropriate for 'at risk' or 'non-academic' students. In such cases it was possible for the majority of students to complete their secondary education without any careers assistance at all. This model was the continuation of the earlier placement-oriented, remedial focus that had emerged during the late 1970s and early 1980s (Khan, 1986; Lauder, et al 1989).

In other schools, transition education had a dual focus. Programmes for all students appropriate to each year level, taught by class teachers, were complemented by a range of courses, activities and options to meet additional specific needs. In these schools counselling and career guidance were closely linked with transition education and the use of LINK programmes, and, although those most 'at risk' might receive some specific help, students participating in these additional optional courses came from the full range of the school population.

A third approach, taken by still other schools comprised a mix of the alternative and integrated programmes. Such schools provided, for example, separate programmes for 'at risk' students, some work exploration as part of social studies in the fourth form, and an optional module for school leavers.

Of these, the third approach, which combined integrated and alternative courses was advocated as being the most appropriate in guidelines given to schools (Department of Education, 1989a, 1989b; Ministry of Education, 1990a). It was also the approach for which funding for Transition programmes was to be allocated (cf., The Education Gazette, 1988b). However, the prevalence of variations outlined in the national survey in 1990 (Educational Review Office, 1991) suggested this 'ideal' was not as closely followed as it might have been.

The following definition from Brien's (1987, p.6) appraisal of the Transition Education programme at Long Bay College emphasised the importance of learning processes, the individual needs of all students and the 'transition across the curricula' philosophy which began to emerge from the late 1980s:

Transition education is for all students. It enables students to understand the changes going on within themselves and prepares them for the changes they will face in their immediate and long term futures. Transition education enables students to tap the resources within themselves and around them so that they may make the educational, vocational, personal and social transitions towards achieving their potential.

Transition education focuses on the skills and processes of a student's learning and development. This focus on the processes requires a change from the traditional teacher-student learning relationships to a new partnership in the learning process involving consultation between student and teacher about content, method, assessment and evaluation. It is the teacher's role to ascertain the state of readiness of each student and encourage and enable each student to move along the path towards a readiness for goal setting; decision-making; handling stress, conflict and

failure; developing new relationships; work exploration; interviews; leaving school; joining the work force; tertiary education and training; and adult life. A student's state of readiness varies. Thus, transition education must be regarded as a spiral of skills and knowledge which penetrates all levels of a school's curriculum.

Transition education is about change. Change in students and the changes they face in their lives. It is student-centred, flexible and dynamic.

Clearly, by the end of the 1980s, the Transition Education concept was so broad that arguably it could be said to define what all education should be about. A more sceptical view is that the focus on transition per se clouded the need to restructure the schooling system and make radical changes to the whole curriculum.

In practice, however, the ad hoc nature of its development, alongside the organisational difficulties created by an education system designed primarily to meet the needs of the academic elite, ensured the philosophical orientation of transition education could never realistically be fully translated into practice during that time. Perhaps of some consolation to those involved in the development of this philosophy, however, has been its prevalence in the guiding principles of the structural reforms in secondary education during the ensuing years (cf., Ministry of Education, 1993a; 1993b). The concept of the 'seamless' education system, described in some detail in the Ministry's (1993a) release of the discussion document 'Education for the 21st Century', legitimated the individual student as the central point of all teaching and learning, an emphasis which had long been the focus of transition education practice (e.g., Brien, 1987; Cuthell, 1986; Department of Education, 1989; Norman & Kerlake, 1985). Moreover, the eight themes recommended in the 'Working Papers', themselves reflecting the career education emphasis documented in 'The Gold' (Department of Education, 1985) clearly anticipated the substance of the eight groupings of essential skills specified in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1993b) "to be developed by all students across the whole curriculum throughout the years of schooling" (p.17).

4.4 Aspects of Transition Education Practice

School-based transition education emerged from ad hoc arrangements and was characterised by considerable variation and local flavour. There was never any national curriculum, the directions having been very much 'grassroots', developed by individual schools' transition education teachers to suit the particular needs of their students, the policy and systems of their school, and the characteristics of their local communities.

The Ministry of Education (1990a) handbook for transition teachers, 'Schools in Transition: Strategies for the Future', summarised the components and coordination of transition under the metaphor of an umbrella, to demonstrate the multifaceted potential of a school's programme. Indeed, a national review of transition education during 1990 (Education Review Office, 1991), noted in the junior school that:

Many programmes previously developed and operating in schools have now come under the transition umbrella.....[including]..... peer support, communication and interpersonal relationships, motivation and goal setting, anger management, and orientation to secondary school.....some aspects of health were also covered in transition education (p.6).

The handbook (Ministry of Education, 1990a) favoured the integrated approach, with provision for 'special needs', capturing the range of developmental, educational and remedial needs of students, individually and in groups. The persistence of themes first alluded to in the McQueen Report (1940) was evident, and they were supported in the national review of transition education (Education Review Office, 1991):

The most effective transition education occurred when there was a school policy specifically addressing coordination, equitable distribution of the resources, improved community, staff and student perception of the transition concepts into curriculum content across all levels (p.11).

Transition Education was seen to 'link' in to the school's guidance network, and mention was made (Ministry of Education, 1990a) of the importance of coordination between the school guidance counsellor, careers adviser and transition teacher in the process. Coordination of guidance, careers and transition was defined as:

A process which involves linking people and resources together so that they function in the most effective way possible to their mutual benefit and to that of those they serve (p.9).

A Departmental Circular (cited in Ministry of Education, 1990a), released in June of 1989 announced the provision of a roll-related allowance for the Transition Coordinator's time. This was to enable the appointment of a member of senior management, with an interest and commitment in this area, to identify and encourage cross curricula initiatives, as well as to coordinate transition, vocational preparation and choice and guidance activities. They were also to work alongside Special Needs programmes and Health Education. The coordinator's role was to vary with the size and organisation of the school. Often, Transition Coordinators wore a number of hats, ranging from a senior position within the guidance network, responsible specifically for career-related (e.g., course and career information and advice, work exploration, experience and shadowing) initiatives, to positions responsible for all career, lifeskills, health and special needs provisions in a school.

The literature concerning the involvement and coordination of the guidance network is discussed more fully in Chapter Five, which includes consideration of the literature on elements within the school microsystem which influence young people's career development. In the meantime, this discussion looks more closely at the nature of several particular initiatives that have been and still are the focus of much government resourcing and development in school-based programmes. They include links with tertiary-level learning institutions and partnerships with local business and industry.

4.4.1 The Link Initiative

The Link programme was introduced nationally in 1988 following a pilot trial at the Hutt Valley, Southland, and Waiariki Polytechnics. It was established as a form of multi-institutional education provision, and was presented as a partnership between polytechnics and schools, hence the name of 'Link'. The programme was designed initially to "provide the opportunity for students to experience specialist vocational education and training available in polytechnics whilst still at school" (Department of Education, 1988, p.1).

The initial structure of Link contained a number of elements which defined its distinctive character (Department of Education, 1988). In particular:

- (a) the resource was for schools and for school students;
- (b) the funding and management of courses was located with the polytechnics;
- (c) the delivery of courses was largely envisaged to be in polytechnics, but provision also existed for courses to be run in the high schools or in the community;
- (d) courses were provided for students from individual schools or from a range of schools often spread across a region served by a polytechnic;
- (e) polytechnics were recommended to establish a Link Advisory Committee in order to secure a more informed and coordinated approach;
- (f) Link was for all senior students but priority groups were delineated, for example those students requiring motivation for further participation in school, further education and training.

Extensive guidelines were provided by the Department of Education (1988) on these issues. However, as with Transition Education generally, a number of structural arrangements which cut across existing delivery mechanisms for education meant numerous organisational difficulties and a potential for misunderstanding and conflict. Schools were told that Link funding was a resource for schools, but financial power and organisational control lay with the polytechnics. As an example, the very different cultures of the two types of institution provided opportunity for misunderstanding and conflict to emerge in the arrangements. Polytechnics, having been established to provide training, had a clear vocational focus, whereas secondary schools, historically designed to prepare their students for university, possessed liberal academic values. There was no definition of which schools each polytechnic served, which further minimised the effective influence of any individual school in relation to a specific polytechnic. The students targeted were those not succeeding and not well integrated in the school system, but the Link courses offered were additional to existing school curricula and often distant from the school environment, thus requiring additional efforts to participate.

As suggested by the elements listed above, many other areas of potential difficulty existed, such as the age of students, loco parentis considerations, attendance procedures, assessment and certification, course location, allocation of places to

students and to schools, varying and diverging institutional expectations and organisational arrangements. It was, moreover, a relatively small resource when compared with other transition education initiatives, and it encompassed an unrealistically large range of tasks.

A nationwide evaluation of the Link programme was undertaken in November of 1989. Despite the enormous in-built problematic structure of the initiative, the evaluation team found that “students, teachers, tutors and administrators were generally very positive about Link programmes” (Ministry of Education, 1989, p.2). The executive statement in the report concluded provocatively “it is apparent that if Link is to be accorded its rightful status and realise its full potential, then the issues and recommendations raised in this report need to be addressed” (Ministry of Education, 1989, p.1). No definitive explanations of the meanings intended for the phrases “rightful status” and “realise its full potential” were offered in the report, however. The following year, an amended set of guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1990b) extended several recommendations, in particular, those relating to priority groups and targeting factors. Whilst Link was to remain available to all students, and evidence in 1989 showed that it was being broadly used (Ministry of Education, 1989), several groups were accorded priority status. It was the view of the evaluation team that “targeting of students is occurring infrequently” (p.13) and that “very few Maori students are attending courses” (p.14). Funding was also subsequently made available from August 1990 to specifically targeted junior school (i.e., third and fourth form) students for Link programmes.

The increased emphasis on the provision of Link resources for groups under-represented in tertiary education was consistent with the government policy (Ministry of Education, 1988) which had led to the Link initiative, as was the extension of programmes to students in the junior school, since many of the targeted students were leaving school before becoming eligible to attend Link courses. However, although politically consistent, these changes presented a paradox in practice. As Barnett (1990) pointed out in his briefing paper for the annual Link policy meeting of school principals and the Manawatu Polytechnic, this focus reduced the general acceptability of the programme by the community and as such reduced its value to those participating. The concern expressed by Barnett echoed earlier criticism (e.g., Khan,

1986) of targeting 'at risk' students for vocationally-oriented programmes. Such a policy, it was argued, perpetuated the public perception that vocationally-oriented courses are for less 'academically able' students, and, therefore, represent a second-rate learning route (Barnett, 1990; Khan, 1986). The dilemma for Link was that, being a relatively small resource, open participation of students in Link courses reduced the resources available for targeted students. Whilst the stated Labour Government policy was to encourage all young people into further education and training, resources were never sufficient for this.

The amended guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1990b) recommended that funding remain with polytechnics, but that this situation should be reviewed after two years. This was despite it being noted in the executive statement that:

the uncertainty of its continuation and its ad hoc nature are not encouraging schools and polytechnics to make structural changes (p.1).

Rather than dispelling uncertainty, the evaluation report recommendation thus perpetuated it.

A third recommendation reviewed the lines of responsibility within Link. It became mandatory for Polytechnics to work through what were to become known as Link Advisory Committees (LAC's), to be established as sub-committees of the District Advisory Committees on Transition Education (DACOTE). The functions of the advisory committees were also to include management services:

The development and communication of policy; decisions on targeting and allocation of resources; settlement of disputes (p.6).

With the LACs becoming sub-committees of DACOTE, a triangular structure had been created between the polytechnics who received resources and managed Link, schools who had ownership of the resource, and DACOTE, the community organisations responsible for policy through their LACs. This structural change to increase the role of the community was consistent with the other Labour government transition policy, which located local control of the community-based ACCESS training scheme under Regional Employment and Access Councils (REACs) (Lauder et al, 1989). It also served to remove the responsibility for policy making from the

control of polytechnics and schools. The emphasis now was that Link was a school's resource, serviced by polytechnics, but community driven.

A further change in organisation was added in July of 1990 with the newly formed Careers Service (replacing the Vocational Guidance Service) being given responsibility for allocating LINK funding to prospective providers of LINK courses and for coordinating the LINK programme. The change reflected the transfer of many of the functions relating to transition education from the Transition Division of the former Department of Education to The Careers Service. The Careers Service, which operated under the trade name of QUEST Rapuara until July of 1993 (Smith, 1993), was to be the country's main provider of careers resources, working under contract to the Ministry of Education. Its main function was to give information and support materials on occupations, education and training, as well as offering training and assistance in how to use these effectively (Education Review Office, 1991).

4.4.2 School Industry Links

Links between schools and industry groups have existed in New Zealand for many years. Historically this was in the form of work experience and work exploration. More recently, it has become a formal partnership initiative encouraged by government through financial resourcing, including research and consultancy with the New Zealand Employers' Federation (e.g., Marshall, 1992), and coordinated by The Careers Service.

Participation in work exploration is perhaps one of the most common forms of school industry link experienced by New Zealand secondary school students. It was historically also one of the earliest forms of career education provided in the country's secondary schools (Catherwood, 1985). In an evaluation of transition education programmes during the early 1980s, Norman and Kerslake (1985) found almost one third of all secondary schools providing transition programmes had developed work exploration schemes. In a nationwide survey of upper secondary school students' aspirations and intentions, Rivers, Lynch and Irving (1989) reported that just over half of all students at each form level had participated in work exploration at some point of their secondary school experience.

In the context of the careers guidance programme of a school, work exploration has been described as providing an opportunity for students “in which they actually do a job under as nearly realistic conditions as possible but without payment and not necessarily in an occupation which they will ultimately hope to enter” (Avent, 1975, p.118). According to Avent, it is important to distinguish work exploration from such related activities as work shadowing and work experience. The first of these involved watching work being done, rather than actually participating. In New Zealand secondary schools, job shadowing has been most commonly available to sixth and seventh form students contemplating professional occupations, such as teaching, dentistry, veterinary science, or social work, for example. Amongst the Ministry of Education guidelines for providing work shadowing (Department of Education, 1989b) was the following statement of objectives:

The aim of work shadowing is to develop in students a critical understanding of the working world with a special focus on the roles, feelings and perspectives of workers (p.43).

The guidelines (pp.43-44) then differentiated work shadowing from work exploration according to four dimensions:

- (i) Time: Work shadowing is usually of shorter duration (half or full day) and is relatively easy to fit into the curriculum.
- (ii) Focus: The key focus of work shadowing is observing a specific worker role, as opposed to the overall investigation of the work place through active participation.
- (iii) Coverage: The focus of work shadowing enables it to offer access to occupations that tend to be unsuited to a work exploration placement because of the skills and knowledge required of workers, e.g., senior management. Work shadowing may arise naturally from a work exploration placement, as students, through their investigation of the work place, become aware of skilled occupations they would like to gain additional information on.
- (iv) Tasks: Students observe rather than perform tasks.

A second link with employment, work experience, afforded students the opportunity to try out a job which they hoped to undertake on leaving school. Work experience in New Zealand schools has traditionally been the preferred experience for students who did not intend to pursue formal academic qualifications or to continue on to places of further education or training (Renwick, 1992). It has essentially been a

modern form of the placement emphasis which characterised the earliest orientation of career guidance services in this country's schools (cf., Winterbourne, 1974).

Whilst work shadowing and work experience have been part of the individual career guidance of the student (Department of Education, 1989b), work exploration is more commonly considered part of the social education of a whole class of students (Avent, 1975). The flexibility inherent in the work exploration notion was reflected in a survey of schemes in the Manawatu during 1990 (Ponter, 1991) which found wide variation in provision among schools. Of the nine schools surveyed, three included work exploration as an integral part of all fourth form students' career education experience. Moreover, all schools provided a work exploration component as part of the individualised career guidance of senior students undertaking non-integrated transition or life skills courses.

The benefits of work exploration experience for secondary school students has been described by many writers. For instance, Gaff (1973, p.108) suggested the following four:

- (i) The experience gained by rubbing shoulders with the working world can give a clearer insight into careers and occupations.
- (ii) It can help to develop confidence, personality and increased awareness of one's responsibilities as a young citizen in the community.
- (iii) It develops a sense of regularity, punctuality, responsibility and a knowledge of the world of work.
- (iv) It enables the pupils to have insight into the stresses and tensions that may be experienced in the transition from school to work.

An analysis of the declared and latent objectives of the New Zealand equivalent of work exploration schemes in Britain has suggested that the benefits spread well beyond these four (Watts, 1983). They included:

- (i) *Motivational* - enabling aspects of the school curriculum to become more meaningful and significant to the young person and therefore improving students' attitude toward school.
- (ii) *Social-educational* - enabling students to acquire skills, knowledge, and understandings more effectively learned in work-based rather than school settings. This objective was further divided into three sub-categories:

- (a) Life skills - including: job-seeking skills (real application forms and interviews required for the work exploration); punctuality; independence; responsibility (having other people dependent upon one's own actions); collaboration (working with others rather than in competition with them); and social skills required to relate to adults.
 - (b) Knowledge and understanding of self - helping young people to be able to see themselves differently, to form an alternative construct of 'self'.
 - (c) Knowledge and understanding of society - helping students understand the different types of organisation in society.
- (iii) *Vocational* - assisting students in choosing their future occupation. Again, three sub-categories were identified:
- (a) Orientation - providing a broad understanding of the differences between school and work which would enrich subsequent exploratory activities.
 - (b) Extension - broadening the range of occupations that a student would be prepared to consider.
 - (c) Sampling - enabling a student to test a vocational preference before committing him or herself to it.
- (iv) *Anticipatory* - enabling students to experience some of the strains of work so that, when they started work properly, they would be less likely to leave for 'minor adjustment problems'. Among the facets of work exploration relevant here were the longer working day, relationships with co-workers, and the necessity for young people to fit themselves into situations not organised for their benefit. While there is some overlap here with (iii) (a), the difference was that while 'orientation' would be concerned with preparation for choices, the 'anticipatory' objective would be concerned with preparation for transitions.
- (v) *Placing* - enabling students to establish a relationship with a particular employer which might lead to the offer of a permanent job.

The multifaceted benefits of work exploration, experience and shadowing are especially relevant to careers assistance in secondary schools, which must provide for the range of students' developmental needs within and across form levels. In this decade, links between school and industry have been designed to take on more than an exploratory or 'foot-in-the-door' opportunity for students.

In 1990 the Employers' Federation established a 'School Industry Links Development Board' (Marshall, 1992) made up of industry leaders, with the specific aim "to explore the best ways to coordinate and promote the resources and efforts of all involved in the area" (p.3). Following a synthesis of research and reports on school-industry links commissioned by Quest Rapuara and the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, the Board announced its support for "more effective" career guidance in schools and suggested "teachers and students should experience the world of work beyond the classroom" (Marshall, 1992, p.3.).

In the 1991 Budget, the Government signalled a new industry skills strategy, including major reform of the apprenticeship system. Since the establishment of the Ministry of Education in October of 1989, it had taken on the primary responsibility for policy development in this area. The Education and Training Support Agency (ETSA), from its establishment in July 1990, took responsibility for administering government programmes in support of industry-based training.

The Industry Skills Training Strategy was announced jointly in December of 1991 by the Minister of Education, Dr Lockwood Smith, and the Minister of Labour, Bill Birch, in a booklet entitled 'The Government's New Industry Skills Training Strategy' (The Education Gazette, April, 1992). The Strategy was intended to:

- (i) increase the number of skills and occupations covered by industry-wide training systems;
- (ii) broaden the range of people who have access to recognised training;
- (iii) make training more responsive to industry needs;
- (iv) link training to the new National Qualifications Framework; and
- (v) build and foster a training culture throughout the country.

In June of the following year, the Minister of Education announced the provision of \$380,000 to The Careers Service for the purpose of marketing the school-industry links programme (Pathways, 1992). From the Career Service's perspective:

Links between school and industry will support skill development and ensure the relevance of the secondary curriculum content in all subject areas. Links will also help teachers update their knowledge of industry, and help them apply this knowledge to the curriculum (Pathways, 1992, p.2).

The following year, the Ministry of Education (1993c) released a booklet entitled 'Working Together: Building Partnerships Between Schools and Enterprises'. It set out guidelines for developing and extending links as well as providing a focus for discussion for planning and staff development.

The Industry Skills Training Strategy was intended to increase the responsiveness of the senior school to provide adequate pathways to industry-based education and training, under the new National Qualifications Framework. The industry emphasis was expected to complement well trodden paths to higher education, and newly emergent routes to more vocationally-oriented education and training in polytechnics, provided through the LINK initiative (Ministry of Education, 1992).

In the transitional period from the announcement of the strategy to its linking with the National Qualifications Framework, training content and standards for particular programmes were determined by apprenticeship committees established by ETSA for that purpose. Eventually these committees were replaced by Industry Training Organisations (ITOs). An ITO comprised representatives of a self-defined industry and is responsible for setting skill standards and developing training arrangements specific to that industry.

4.5 Recent Developments

In January 1995, two years after the inception and design of the seamless education system (cf., Ministry of Education, 1993a), the Minister of Education initiated a national review into the nature and availability of government career information and guidance services, with the intent to "ensure such services

complement the significant changes taking place in the education, training and employment environment” (Ministry of Education, 1995a, p.1). The review was headed by Brother Pat Lynch, and individuals and organisations were invited to present submissions by early March on the appropriateness of current provision of information and services throughout the country, what role the Government should play in this provision, and suggestions for improvement.

The review followed the recommendations of an earlier report of the Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment (1994b), which argued, among other proposals, the need for an integrated national career services network to improve coordination and delivery of the country’s education, training and employment systems. The report of the Task Force itself represented a summary of the proposals for action of a series of major reviews on the country’s human resource development needs carried out during 1994. One of these reviews, the ‘Interim Report of the Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment’ (1994a), surveyed the needs of young people in particular, and among the 49 proposals, 25 related to the need for young people to have access to adequate and appropriate careers assistance whilst still at school. Many of these proposals implied that the adequacy of funding for careers services within schools should be a serious consideration. Many suggestions from the Interim Report were later followed-up by the Career Information and Guidance Review Panel.

The review team consulted widely, and in June of 1995 released their report (Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995), which accomplished what was clearly an extraordinarily difficult task in bringing together the threads of a fragmented and varied industry. The Report was timely, and at the time of release was the most comprehensive document on the nature and needs of the careers service industry in New Zealand. Significant for an industry that has evolved largely from ‘grass roots’ practice wisdom and reactive decisions, was the detailing of standardised definitions. These were derived from the empirical work of Byrne and Beavers (1993) in the development of National Guidelines for Career Education in Australia, and differentiated between career information, career education, career guidance, and career counselling. As these distinctions are also used in this thesis, the definitions, as specified by the Review Panel (1995, p.13) are reproduced here:

Career Information covers job descriptions, information about employment trends and opportunities, education and training providers, courses and qualifications, costs, remuneration and financial assistance associated with these options. It includes programmes which aid decision making and information seeking. The information can be used in career education, career guidance and career counselling.

Career Guidance is a systematic programme of processes and techniques which focuses on helping individuals move from a general understanding to a specific understanding of the realistic options open to him or her for future career, work and lifestyle and to facilitate the individual in making employment decisions.

Career Education is concerned with the development of skills, attitudes and understanding through planned programmes of learning and experiences which assist students to make informed decisions about school and post-school options and directions and enable effective participation in working life. It aims to assist students to:

- (a) develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals, including the personal resources, both actual and potential, they bring to situations;
- (b) develop knowledge and understanding of the general structures of post-school life, including the range of opportunities, the alternative pathways and the demands, rewards and satisfaction associated with each;
- (c) learn how to make considered choices and plan options in relation to anticipated careers, occupations and life roles; and
- (d) effectively manage the implementation of the considered choices and the transitions from the school to post-school situations in adult and work life.

Career Counselling is targeted at people who still have not been able to arrive at a realistic career, training or further education choice, despite some exposure to career education and/or career guidance programmes. Career counselling, unlike general counselling, must include as an ingredient the transmission of expert knowledge about work outlets and their requirements and other essential knowledge about adult life, without which people cannot make realistic and relevant choices which avoid sex stereotypes and are unconstrained by social conditioning.

Thus, in a pyramid of careers assistance, career information provides the basic, descriptive knowledge for making decisions and upon which the development of career knowledge and skills are based. Career guidance provides an intentional, advisory service, helping individuals to relate and interpret information in their career planning and decision-making. Career education provides structured learning experiences, with

the intention of developing specific knowledge and skills. Career counselling operates on an in-depth interpersonal level with the aim of identifying personal career development needs and helping to develop the personal resources to overcome barriers toward meeting these needs.

The term 'career services' was used by the Review Panel to encompass all of these dimensions of provision, whilst the term 'career industry' was intended as a broad statement to represent the network of career service providers (Report of the Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995).

In the tradition of contemporary discourse characterising this 'post-reform' era, the report identified the need to provide people with the resources to be able to become "self-steering" (p.5) in their own career development. It emphasised providing young people, in particular, with the experiences to develop the foundation repertoire of knowledge and skills to manage their own career development. It identified the secondary school system as a key player in this process:

Schools are in a prime position to provide career education, information and guidance and should be providing the foundation from which individuals gain the skills to make future decisions (p.37).

The Report alluded to principles of neutrality, universality of provision and appropriate delivery in careers services; supported a national coordination of service, with regional delivery; and emphasised the importance of a coordinated professional development and training system to service the training needs and professional standards of those servicing the careers industry.

In Part II of the Report, the Panel was critical of the lack of development, coordination and professionalism amongst career services in schools:

Many schools offer only average to poor provision with little or no monitoring of the quality of outcomes. In these schools career services are accorded a low priority, staff receive little support and resource apportionment is insufficient to meet all student needs. Students frequently have limited access to information and career development support. Very few schools have a coherent programme of career guidance which caters for students from Year 10 (Form 4). All too often career services availability and accessibility are inadequate or not well presented (p.37).

Direction toward the provision of a quality service in schools was provided by observations of schools considered to provide “students with excellent service” (p.37). Amongst the features of these schools were:

.....a high level of staff commitment and a strong focus on the provision of relevant career services by both senior management and school staff. In these schools staff are provided with training and support in the provision of career information and guidance, while structured individualised programmes for all students are part of the curriculum delivery. There is a recognition that every student requires guidance and assistance to identify potential careers. Parents, caregivers and the business community are generally involved (p.37).

The Panel made recommendations (p.39) for Government to direct the Ministry of Education to strengthen the range, quality and delivery of school-based provisions. In particular, the Government was urged to support:

- (a) the development of clearly defined school responsibilities in the delivery of careers services (including information, guidance, education and counselling); together with
- (b) guidelines and examples of ‘good practice’;
- (c) programmes integrated with the mainstream curriculum;
- (d) the development of links with industry;
- (e) encouragement of schools to apply for resources;
- (f) implementation of systematic annual evaluation (under the direction of ERO) of career services;
- (g) the transfer of Link funding from The Careers Service to the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) pool; and
- (h) a central base for resource allocation, the Core Resource Entitlement.

In a media release, the Minister of Education (1995b) publicly endorsed the recommendations of the review and announced the provision of an extra \$12.3 million over three years to fund career service initiatives. This commitment was further reinforced in a letter to Boards of Trustees and Principals, in which the Minister of Education required that schools be accountable for provision of career information and guidance to students at secondary school by introducing this responsibility into the

National Education Goals and Administration Guidelines (Minister of Education, 1996a).

The official responsibility of secondary schools to provide for the career development of their students reaches beyond the readiness to make informed decisions about subject options to include the personal resources required for continued learning and career transitions throughout students' post-school lives. The nature of these 'resources' and the role of elements within the school microsystem, which influence their nature and acquisition by young people, are the focus of the following and final chapter (Chapter Five) of Part Two.

The Nature of Adolescence and the Role of Career Development

5.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the career development world view inherent in the thesis, which conceives of the process as a journey intimately linked to personal development. The quest for a personal sense of self is presented as the central developmental challenge during adolescence, with attainment of an identity in the career realm as one of the most challenging and overt aspects of the identity formation process. An underlying theme is the cumulative nature of career development, which expresses the notion that experiences during the adolescent years have developmental consequences regarding the negotiation of career journeys during the adult years. In keeping with the integrative perspective of developmental contextualism, the chapter explores elements within school and family experience which influence and are influenced by the young person's career development. The particular foci in relation to the overall thesis are represented by the darker shaded area in Figure 5.1.

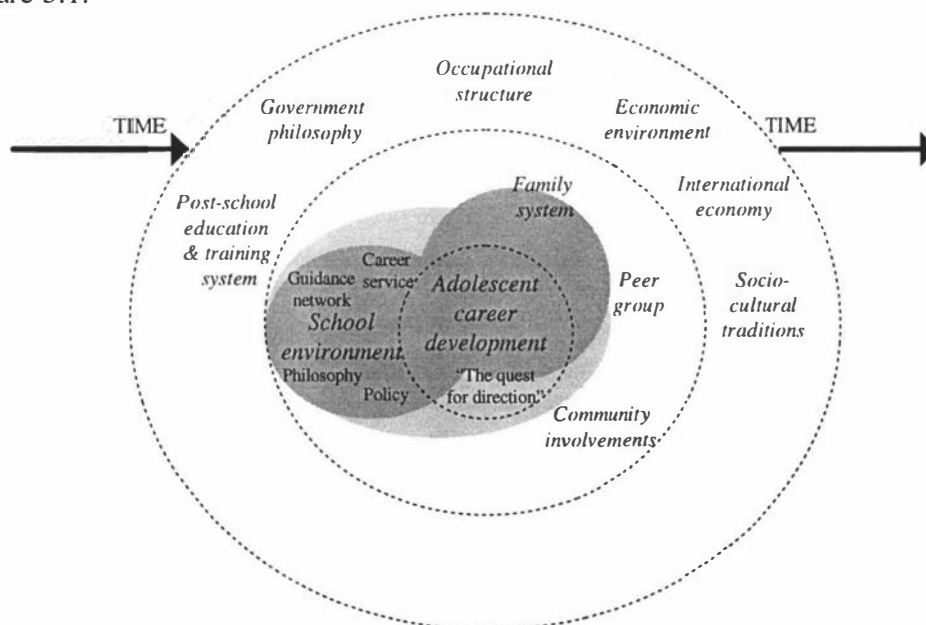


Figure 5.1
The microsystem characteristics of adolescent career development and the mesosystem (relationships between personal, family and school) influences

5.2 The Nature of Adolescent Development

The word 'adolescence' is synonymous with change in a variety of developmental domains. It comes from the Latin *adolescere* which means to 'grow up' or 'to come to maturity', a process developmentally characterised as identity formation (Blustein, 1994; Erikson, 1968, 1980; Marcia, 1980, 1988; Newman & Newman, 1991; Waterman, 1984) and understood to be a gradual integration of personal changes with environmental demands.

The view that young people are especially concerned with the pursuit of a personal sense of self has long been associated with Erik Erikson (Blustein & Noumair, 1996). As these authors pointed out, the Eriksonian-derived construct provided the foundation of present-day thinking about this subject. Although Erikson was trained in the psychoanalytic tradition, he later modified many Freudian ideas in the light of his own thought and experience, most notably involving narrative analyses of historical figures including Martin Luther and Mohandas Gandhi, and anthropological studies of the Sioux and Yurok Indians. Essentially, Erikson widened the potential application of psychoanalytic theory by transforming a psychosexual theory of development into a more inclusive psychosocial one. Whilst Freud focused on the child's psychosexual development within the family, Erikson took into account the individual's psychosocial relationships within larger society. Furthermore, whereas Freud's stages covered only the years between birth and puberty, Erikson's theory extended issues of growth and development throughout the life span.

Newman and Newman (1991) identified several characteristics of the psychosocial perspective that inform a developmental contextualist position. First, this perspective addressed growth across the life span, identifying and differentiating among issues of central importance from infancy through the adult years. Second, it assumed that we are not entirely at the mercy of biological and environmental influences; we have the capacity to contribute to our own psychological development at every stage of life. The theory asserted that people integrate, organise and conceptualise their own experiences in such a way as to protect themselves and direct the course of their own lives. Third, the perspective took into consideration the active contribution of culture to personal growth. At each life stage, cultural goals and aspirations, social expectations and requirements, and the opportunities that the culture

provides make demands on our development. These demands draw forth reactions, which then influence the systems within the person's capabilities which will be developed. This vital link between the individual and the world was seen as being a key mechanism of development.

5.2.1 The Quest for Identity

The developmental challenge of adolescence involves the formation of a coherent ego identity based on one's self-exploration and resolution, with the attendant danger of identity confusion (Erikson, 1968, 1980; Josselson, 1988; Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1984). Erikson expressed what he meant by this challenge most succinctly in his volume titled 'Identity: Youth and Crisis' (1968):

The wholeness to be achieved at this stage I have called a sense of inner identity. The young person, to experience wholeness, must feel a progressive continuity between that which he [sic] has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future; between that which he conceived himself to be and that which he perceives others to see in him and to expect of him. Individually speaking, identity includes, but is more than, the sum of all the successive identifications of those earlier years when the child wanted to be, and often was forced to become, like the people he depended on. Identity is a unique product, which now meets a crisis to be solved only in new identifications with age mates and with leader figures outside of the family (Erikson, 1968, p.87).

Reflecting the contemporary vigour of this line of thinking, recent theorists (e.g., Marcia, 1988; Waterman, 1984) have expanded on Erikson's original ego-identity construct to better express acknowledgement of the interdependence of the person and their world in the formation and expression of self. Illustrating the sort of inclusive view that has been advanced, Josselson (1988) defined identity as "a dynamic fitting together of parts of the personality with the realities of the social world so that a person has a sense both of internal coherence and meaningful relatedness to the real world" (pp.12-13). The process of developing this sense of 'internal coherence' and 'meaningful relatedness' is a dynamic one that unfolds as people assess their

competencies and aspirations within a changing social context of expectations, demands and resources.

In the realm of psychosocial development, the identity construct is a broad one, reflecting the many facets of developmental experience across the life span. At the same time, developmentalists generally are in agreement (cf., Kroger, 1993) that the process during the adolescent years involves three essential tasks which capture the overall essence of the young person's experience. First, is the sense of sameness, of continuity between past and present selves, which most characteristically involves maintaining a fairly strong sense of continuity with previous experiences, affirming many aspects of self, whilst rejecting others. A second component pertains to the integration of private and public selves, a process of integrating the personal elements of self with the more role-oriented selves that others know us by. An inability to achieve this sense of 'integration' manifests itself in gross misperceptions and illusions about the self that may in turn hinder a young person's efforts to achieve realistic goals and find balance in relationships with others and in society in general (Josselson, 1988). Third, the adolescent's experience of identity confronts the relationship between one's present self and one's future or potential self. This must be discovered through an active process of trial and error and involves considerable anxiety. As research has suggested (Marcia, 1988; Waterman, 1984), more often than not, it is the concern for the 'self I can be' that evokes the most anxiety for youth. The anxiety accompanying this process is understandable as young people are confronted with 'letting go' of some existing aspects of themselves, which are known, whilst affirming potential aspects of themselves that are not fully known.

The identity formation process tends to occur gradually and unconsciously in the lives of most young people. As Marcia (1980) pointed out, the achievement of a new way of viewing the self "gets done by bits and pieces" (p.161). Sometimes there are major decisions to be made dealing with whether to pursue paid employment after high school or continue on to university. At other times, the decisions may seem trivial, such as which courses to take and whom to date. In most cases, decisions are not made once and for all but have to be made again and again. Thus, one attribute which has consistently been found to compare highly with 'success' in the realm of identity is 'flexibility' (Blustein & Noumair, 1996). That is, having resolved one's

identity crisis during the adolescent years does not preclude future crises and decisions. Rather, the successful resolution of one's identity at adolescence provides the necessary stability from which to explore subsequent revisions. As Erikson (1968) stated, an optimal sense of identity is experienced as a "sense of psychological well-being, a feeling [of being] at home in one's body", "knowing where one is going", and the assurance of "anticipated recognition from those who count" (p.165).

5.2.2 Patterns of Identity Formation and Expression

One of the most widely used paradigms for assessing identity formation was devised by Marcia (Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1982). The major criteria used were the presence or absence of a critical period of exploration (crisis) and the extent of the adolescent's personal involvement or decision-making (commitment) in two key areas - occupation and ideology. Marcia identified four different categories for classifying an adolescent's identity status: (i) identity achieved, (ii) foreclosed, (iii) moratorium and (iv) identity Diffused. He described these as styles or processes by which the young person pursues the tasks of establishing and revising their sense of personal self.

People who are 'identity achieved' have faced the identity crisis and have already resolved many of the issues involved. Typically, they have chosen a career goal and have a good sense of their own values. At the same time, they are flexible, engaging in a continual process of self reflection that enables them to change their life goals, as necessary, depending upon their experience.

Young people classified in the 'identity foreclosure' status have largely avoided any substantial identity exploration although they demonstrate firm occupational and ideological commitments. Their occupational and ideological beliefs appear to be very close to those of their parents. But, as Rothman (1984) pointed out, the foreclosed identity is deceptive. On the surface, at least, these people appear much like the identity achievers. Inwardly, however, they experience a high level of anxiety, depression and defeatist thoughts and feelings, suggesting that even though they have specific goals, they are greatly concerned about fulfilling these and others' expectations of them.

The state of 'moratorium' during adolescence was defined as a developmental period during which commitments either have not yet been made or are rather

exploratory and tentative. Such individuals have made few, if any, firm commitments to a career direction or to personal values. However, whilst the young person is in the process of searching and exploring, the world does not look stable or predictable and, understandably, the adolescent expresses high levels of anxiety, which suggest continued awareness of an unresolved life crisis (Rothman, 1984). Unlike the profile of the foreclosed identity, however, the individual engaged in exploration generally is better adjusted, has a more integrated personality and is more self-accepting (Muuss, 1988). In this sense moratorium is considered the adolescent issue *par excellence* (Erikson, 1968, 1980). Indeed, as Marcia (1980) pointed out, moratorium is truly an essential and necessary prerequisite for identity achievement.

The 'identity-diffused' might or might not have experienced a crisis, demonstrating a complete lack of commitment, tentative or otherwise. Those who are identity diffused are unable to make the most of available opportunities, an inability to: '*Carpe Diem*'. Not surprisingly, self esteem is poor and tolerance for stress limited (Rothman, 1984). As a consequence, these individuals delay making life choices, feeling they are not ready for them. Some might lose themselves in an endless absorption with social life, sex and drugs. Others might become loners and drifters, shifting from one interest to another. As Erikson (1980) pointed out, some degree of role confusion is an inherent part of the adolescent experience; young people invariably experiencing occasional moments of bewilderment and self-doubt. However, those who are persistently plagued by a confusion of their personal identities are at odds with themselves and the world. Even then, such individuals can be viewed on a continuum. At one end are those with the mildest degree of confusion, the normal 'lost' adolescents (Erikson, 1980), who outwardly might function fairly well but inwardly have little sense of who they are or where they are heading. At the other end are young people who are psychiatrically disturbed, often needing mental health care.

Sometimes cultural expectations and demands provide the young person with a clearly defined self-image that is completely contrary to the cultural values of the community. This was termed a 'negative identity' by Erikson (1968). Such expressions as 'failure', 'good-for-nothing', and 'juvenile delinquent' are labels that adult society commonly apply to such adolescents (Newman & Newman, 1991). In the absence of any indication of the possibilities of success or contribution to society,

the young person often accepts such negative labelling as a self-definition and proceeds to validate this identity by continuing to behave in ways that reinforce and strengthen it.

Throughout the process of self-exploration and personal growth, young people tend to shift from one ego-identity to another. During this, most are expected to experience temporary periods of confusion and depression (Waterman, 1982). Generally, however, young people are expected to achieve greater sense of direction and personal awareness as they move through the adolescent years. This trend was evident in a series of studies by Waterman (1985) on identity and career choice among young people of various age groups, ranging from junior high school to college (the New Zealand equivalent of Forms 1 to 4 through to the senior levels involving Forms 5 to 7 in secondary education and possibly the first years of tertiary experience at polytechnic or university). Waterman reported first a steady increase in the proportion of young people who reach the identity achievement status, ranging from five percent in the early years of high school to about 40 percent by the senior years. Second, he reported a corresponding decrease in the percentage of those in the identity confusion state; from almost half of the students in junior high school to only 14 percent among those in the final years of secondary education. Third, the moratorium status tended to peak during the senior years at high school, when youth were more actively pondering their career goals and plans. Finally, for reasons that Waterman himself was unable to explain, the category of foreclosure seemed to remain relatively stable throughout this period, and included from one-quarter to one-third of all young people, depending on the age group. As Waterman pointed out, the foreclosure status is developmentally appropriate during early adolescence, as the young need psychological time to adapt to the impact of pubertal changes; however, it is less so during the latter years of high school. Youth at this level who remain in the foreclosure status might be somewhat apprehensive about their personal development, passively accepting roles and views from parents and others with little questioning, rather than actively exploring their choices. He suggested that such youths might fear that if they were to question the ideas and values they had grown up with, they might lose control, go 'adrift', or have no sense of purpose in life. This lack of growth might also entail developmentally disabling characteristics, such as rigid beliefs and defensive

behaviour (Waterman, 1985), attributes which are at odds with the flexibility recognised as crucial for healthy development in the personal identity realm (Blustein & Noumair, 1996).

5.2.3 Links to Maturation Changes

The tendency toward active self-exploration which characterises personal development in identity formation during adolescence is linked to maturational changes in the cognitive realm, which enable greater capacity for self-reflection and abstract reasoning. Research (e.g., Lee Shain & Farber, 1989) has established a link between the advanced identity statuses of achievement and moratorium during adolescence and a greater capacity for self-reflection. Yet, as Lee Shain and Farber (1989) also pointed out, it is not clear whether self-reflection enhances identity status or vice versa. Perhaps, as in Erikson's view, the two processes are synergistic. Or, from Piaget's perspective (cited in Newman & Newman, 1991), the emergence of abstract thinking and self-reflection might lead to increased awareness of self and a greater need to 'separate' from one's parents and find a distinctive place in the world. In any event, the increased capacity for self reflection typically accompanies many of the processes that enhance self-exploration, including taking a social perspective.

5.2.4 The Role of the Family

The family environment has been considered especially germane to the quality of personal development during adolescence. A substantial literature has suggested that parents can affect children's self-esteem, self-competence, values and psychological orientation (Dusek, 1991). Yet parents' ability to influence is also a function of the changing nature of the parent-child relationship during adolescence (cf. Collins & Russel, 1991). For example, Resenburt (1986, cited in Collins & Russel, 1991) reported that self-conceptions were highly influenced by the interpretations that adolescents made of their family experience.

In the specific realm of identity formation, exploration and commitment were seen as most likely to occur in a family system that encompassed some degree of parent-adolescent attachment in conjunction with an adaptive degree of adolescent autonomy (Grotevant & Cooper, 1985). Family connectedness involves sensitivity to the views of

others, thereby respecting and supporting the young person's need to challenge. Autonomy has to do with the adolescent's individual expression of personal beliefs, which may or may not be shared with other family members, but which are nevertheless respected within the family. Other theoretical statements (e.g., Josselson, 1988; Marcia, 1988) and empirical studies (e.g., Blustein et al, 1991) have essentially corroborated the view that identity development occurs most adaptively in a family environment that provides emotional support and fosters autonomy.

5.2.5 The School Environment

Experiences within the high school environment also exert considerable influence on personal development in identity formation during adolescence. The potency of this environment is particularly pertinent in the New Zealand situation at the time of writing, as educationalists (e.g., Stirling, 1998) debate possible links between the generally low academic performance of boys, as compared to girls, and young male peer pressure inhibiting public displays of intellectual aptitude.

In their survey of the behaviour and health of young people in Holland, Diekstra, Garnefski, De Heus, De Zwart, Van Praag and Warner (1991; cited in Meeus, 1993) found that 86% of all Dutch students considered school to be important. Similarly, research in Germany (Hurrelmann, 1990) indicated that adolescents looked upon poor school performance as their most serious problem. Mellor (1994), in her summary of the appraisal of recent school graduates' opinions concluded "worthwhile school experiences can make for happy students and strong, confident adults" (p.37). That experiences in the microsystem of the school are important has been underscored by research linking poor school performance to psychosomatic complaints, including headaches, anxiety, poor concentration (Hurrelmann, Engel, Holler & Nordlohne, 1988), aggressive behaviour (Engle, 1988) and juvenile delinquency (Junger-Tas, 1985; cited in Meeus, 1993). Such work suggests that experiences in school are intimately connected to the young person's development, although the research cited above supports a relational, rather than a causal, link between the two.

Likewise, within a developmental contextualist frame of reference, progress made in identity formation during the high school years is a product of the interaction between student values and needs and the demands and opportunities of the school environment.

The interaction between these factors was illustrated in a study that compared young males who had transferred or dropped out of their first year of university with those who remained enrolled (Simpson, Baker & Mellinger, 1980). Students were categorised as either failing or withdrawing in good standing. Two factors were associated with all the withdrawal students: (i) lack of social integration, feeling lonely and having few or no close friends, and (ii) low educational aspirations. However, there were some interesting differences between the students who withdrew in good standing and those who withdrew when they were failing. Students who saw a university degree as an occupational credential were more likely to withdraw from university when they were obtaining low grades. By contrast, students who held non-traditional values and who considered withdrawing in their first year of study were more likely to withdraw as their grade point average increased. Simpson, et al (1980) found that the kinds of meaning these young men ascribed to their education as they entered university influenced the way they interpreted the feedback they received about their abilities. Those who were attending university in order to achieve occupational goals interpreted low grades as a message that they did not have the ability to achieve them and thus chose to withdraw. Students who were attending university to experience a more diverse lifestyle or participate in the university's political climate interpreted good grades as evidence that they did not need the university environment in order to achieve their goals.

Whilst the economic value of a tertiary education may be different as we approach the new millennium, thereby, perhaps, countering the relative 'ease' by which the students in the study by Simpson, et al (1980) were able to 'abandon' their degrees, the research is valuable in its illustration of the interaction of personal identity with educational experience. More specifically, it highlights the potential within these environments to provide a climate conducive to gaining self-knowledge and exploring roles and values in order to aid identity development.

5.3 Career Development: An Expression of Personal Self-Meaning

Attainment of an identity in the career realm has long been recognised as one of the most challenging and overt aspects of the identity formation process for adolescents. This is illustrated by the central role of self-awareness in all career development theories (cf., Blustein, 1994; Blustein & Noumair, 1996). Theorists have

used different constructs, however, to define the essential self attributes linked to career development, and these constructs in turn, differ along important dimensions, such as their level of abstraction. Super (1951) provided the earliest and most lasting developmental definition of career:

A continuous, lifelong process of developing and implementing a self-concept, testing that self-concept against reality, with satisfaction to self and benefit to society (p.88).

In his life span developmental model, Super (1963) provided a multidimensional definition of the self-concept, supplemented by a developmental sequence describing the growth and crystallisation of self image. In this view, the clarity and certainty of a career path was directly proportional to the degree of exploration and affirmation of personal identity; that is, how we see ourselves and what we want to become, in relation to the world of work.

Bordin (1990), who perhaps provided the most abstract image, drew from traditional drive-oriented models and the newer relationally oriented psychoanalytic approaches in his inclusion of self (e.g., Kohut, 1977) and identity (e.g., Erikson, 1968) in his psychodynamic model.

Holland's (1985) 'person-environment fit' model employed the personality construct of identity. Holland wrote that during childhood and adolescence "increasing differentiation of preferred activities, interests, competencies and values" (pp.16-17) took place. These events, in turn, created a personality type that predisposes individuals to develop characteristic skills and coping mechanisms, which include, among other things, the person's self-concept.

Loftquist and Dawis (1991) used the self-image construct in their person-environment correspondence model. In this approach, the self-image represents "the individual's perception of his or her personality, that is, of his or her psychological needs and values in interactions with the main general environments (e.g., work, social, educational, family) that life presents" (Loftquist & Dawis, 1991, p. 62).

The social learning approach to careers (e.g., Mitchell, Jones & Krumboltz, 1979; Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1990) included the construct of self-observation generalisation, derived from social learning theory, and referring to subjective appraisals of one's task efficacy, interest and personal values.

The importance of issues around 'Who am I?' in adolescent career development has been further supported by research exploring the relationships between career development and the development of an ego identity. For example, in a study of the relationship between the identity formation process and identity development amongst college students, Blustein, Devenis and Kidney (1989) found that exploratory activity in the vocational domain related to exploration in various interpersonal and ideological domains.

Similarly, Vondracek and Skorikov (1997) reported evidence in support of the theoretically expected relationship between development in selected dimensions of career development and progression in general identity development in a sample of high school students. In an analysis of variance, with ego identity status as an independent variable, Vondracek and Skorikov found significant overall differences in relation to students' attitudes and openness to a wide range of work activity, their willingness to explore various occupational pathways, and their confidence in their ability to succeed in a wide range of occupations. Along these three dimensions, the authors reported the same pattern in relation to identity status: the lowest scores were observed in the 'identity diffusion' group and the highest in the 'achievement' group, with the 'moratorium' and 'foreclosure' groups being the second and third highest, respectively (Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997).

In my own research (Bloor, 1991) conducted in New Zealand, it was found that high school graduates' sense of clarity and confidence with their post-high school path was predictably related to career self-awareness, assessed by scores on the Vocational Identity (VI) scale of the 'My Vocational Situation' (Holland, Daiger & Power, 1980).

5.4 Career Development during Adolescence

Many studies, both overseas (cf., Violato & Holden, 1988; Dodge, 1990; Poole & Evans, 1988) and in New Zealand (cf., McGee & Stanton, 1992) have indicated that concerns about future educational and occupational pathways constitute a major source of worry for young people. In their study of the basic concerns of Australian adolescents, Poole and Evans (1988) found the most frequently mentioned concerns to be as follows: decisions around education and employment (41%);

personal and family relationships (28%); personal development (10%); social and ethical issues (7%); money (6%); leisure (5%); and, finally, concern with 'the future' (3%). In New Zealand, McGee and Stanton (1992) identified four types of stressful life-events amongst their sample of high school students: problems relating to self-image and independence; academic and physical competence; parental conflict; and moving residence and school. A predominant theme expressed throughout all life events was to do with life-course concerns, including career and employment.

Donald Super has been the career development theorist most explicit about the developmental characteristics and needs of adolescents in the career realm (Blustein, 1992, 1997; Herr, 1997; Phillips & Blustein, 1994). Indeed, as Herr (1997) pointed out in a recent tribute to Super's contribution to career development theory and counselling practice, Super's approach has been "the primary interpretation of a developmental approach to career development used in the United States, Europe, Japan, and other nations in the industrialised world" (p.244). Furthermore, my own appraisal of career education in New Zealand secondary schools (Bloor, 1991) identified the pervasive influence of Super's concepts on both policy and practice. Working within a human development framework, Super (1957, 1963, 1980, 1981, 1990, 1994) viewed career development as a lifelong journey with multiple pathways.

In one of these publications (Super, 1980) he introduced the analogy of roles within the theatres of a person's life, using what he termed the 'Life Career Rainbow' to illustrate the longitudinal nature of roles that most persons play; how these roles emerge, interact, and possibly conflict; and how they shape decision points that occur before, and at the time of, taking on a new role, giving up an old one, or making significant changes to the nature of an existing role. The rainbow of an adolescent might include the life roles of child, student, leisurite, citizen, sports person, and, perhaps, part-time worker. The associated 'theatres' would encompass the home, school, family, leisure context, sports field and community.

Within the developmental contextualist frame of reference, these roles express the multiple characteristics of the young person, with the theatres capturing what Bronfenbrenner (1979) referred to as microsystems. The characteristics of the various theatres in turn may nurture, challenge or hinder role development as the young person moves within and among them (i.e., the mesosystem of adolescent development). For

Super (1980), the Life Career Rainbow was intended to convey the notion that “the simultaneous combination of life roles constitutes the life style; their sequential combination structures the life space and constitutes the life-cycle. The total structure is the career pattern” (p.288). Inherent in this notion is the inseparability of career from life, which is consistent with the developmental-contextual model proposed by Vondracek, et al (1986), and advocated in this thesis as the most appropriate lens for approaching adolescent career development.

5.4.1 The Definitional Landscape of Career Development

Within the contemporary life space of adolescence, ‘career’ refers to roles which are primarily learning and work oriented, following the position of Watts (1996). This definition is similar to that of others also, such as Cochran (1994) who defined career as “the productive side of life, what a person strives for and sometimes accomplishes” (p.42). In emphasising learning and work, ‘career’ incorporates the network of terms that make up a universal understanding of a person taking action to achieve some purpose, this network including terms such as ‘goals’, ‘means’, ‘plans’ and ‘choices’. Importantly, this approach expands the conventional focus of work from the sole theatre of ‘paid employment’, to include journeys along non-paid pathways, most typically, in the many possible contexts of learning. For most New Zealand adolescents these will be through secondary schooling, but they may also include tertiary education and industry-based training, which includes polytechnic study.

In assuming a developmental perspective, a career is not experienced all at once in an immediate moment, but as an evolving story. This process of gradual meaning-making has been described by Bruner (1987) as a ‘narrative representation’, which captures the person’s life theme and by Josselson (1988) as the search for ‘internal coherence’ and ‘meaningful relatedness’ in adolescence. Erikson (1968) defined it as identity formation. Whilst it is being lived, the young person’s career has a past (available through memory) and a future (available via anticipation and imagination). From the perspective of the present, career is a composition of meaning that has been, is being, and will be lived (Super, 1990).

5.4.2 Stages of Career Development

One of Super's notions was that throughout the life span ('maxicycle') people experienced a series of phases (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement), each of which presented a developmental challenge that had to be addressed to negotiate the current life stage (Super, 1981). Moreover, the same stages could also be experienced in 'minicycles' within each of the 'maxicycle' stages. For example, a young woman entering the life stage of 'exploration', embarking on a teaching career, might first go through a 'growth' stage in which she learned to relate to others in the work situation, then proceed to 'explore' how she could best operate in this new environment, 'establish' a niche for herself within the school network, 'maintain' the place securely for some time, and, eventually, 'disengage', or reduce involvement in the existing role as experiences in school prompt the need perhaps to move once again into relatively uncharted territory, such as taking on more responsibility in her department.

In earlier theoretical statements, Super (1957) linked stages of career development vertically to stages in the life span, essentially describing the conventional one-track career pattern that characterised understanding about development in this realm at this time. It was in his later work that Super (1981, 1990; 1994) modified the notion of stages to accommodate the changing nature of work and resulting multiplicity of career patterns that had emerged (cf., Reich, 1991). Accordingly, the stages were now more readily considered as cyclic throughout the life span with challenges presenting themselves many times during an individual's lifetime. The career development journey, then, is a process of change, not always necessarily obvious, but nevertheless one that is evolving in response to the developing person in relation to their changing world.

5.4.3 Career Development Challenges

An important component of Super's approach is the notion of a developmental challenge as the focus for movement in career development (Super, 1980). The developmental challenge, known in the psychosocial literature as 'developmental tasks' (Newman & Newman, 1991), was a concept that emerged from Havighurst's (1953, 1972) initial work with socially alienated young people. These tasks described the

repertoire of personal development skills and competences that contributed to increased mastery over the environment.

Developmental tasks arise from the combination of societal expectations and developmental needs within the context of the person's life space. The tasks form a sequence: success in learning the tasks of one stage leads to development and greater chance of success in learning tasks in later stages. Failure at the tasks in a particular stage, for whatever reason, leads to greater difficulty with later tasks required of the person, perhaps creating a situation which makes later tasks impossible to master. Moreover, tasks are developmentally multifaceted, reflecting gains to greater or lesser extent in physical, cognitive, social or emotional (self-understanding) skills. A developmental task in infancy, for example, is the creation of an attachment to a caregiver. This task presents itself early in the young child's development, and must be mastered at this time of life. As empirical work in the attachment literature has suggested (e.g., Bowlby, 1988), the person's ability to develop intimate relationships in adult life is built on an initial sense of attachment to a caregiver during infancy.

The notion of developmental tasks is particularly relevant to the world view in this thesis, as it links adolescent experiences to development through the life span. As suggested by Super (1980), developmental tasks can and do reoccur as the individual recycles through life stages previously completed. Experiences during the adolescent years then, may provide an important foundation for revisiting career development challenges during adulthood, as new events and life changes prompt the need to revisit established journeys and perhaps re-explore or re-decide existing pathways. From a developmental point of view, the quality of career development during adolescence shapes the quality of career development during adulthood.

5.4.4 The Quest for Direction

The key career development task during adolescence identified by Super is the quest for direction. He referred to this challenge as the 'exploratory' stage in his model, characterised by the 'crystallisation' and 'specification' of a career path. Crystallisation, in this context, referred to the narrowing of a career direction into several possibilities, and specification required that the person make a commitment to a particular direction. The developmental tasks for the high school adolescent in the

process of crystallisation might include (a) further development of interests, abilities and talents, (b) choice of high school curriculum, and (c) development of autonomy, for example, taking responsibility for one's decisions. Specification at this stage of development might be expressed in terms of preferences for (a) pursuing further education at a place of higher learning (e.g., university), (b) job searching, or (c) undertaking education towards a particular vocation (e.g., at a college of education or institute of technology).

The term 'commitment' has been used to describe the act of following through on a particular career-related decision. Movement in career development arises from commitment. The quality of that movement is in turn a function of the quality of the exploration which precedes it (Blustein, 1992; Blustein & Phillips, 1988; Caple, 1982; Jordaan, 1963; Swanson, 1995). If exploration has been shallow, then the level of commitment, likewise, is likely to be weak. This might bring on a degree of uncertainty and insecurity about any action that follows a decision and, effectively, provides an environment for stagnation of development. If exploration has been meaningful and thorough, a strong sense of direction emerges, and a certain clarity about the future. Clarity and certainty also bring forth a sense of power and out of this comes a heightened sense of well-being. Links between a clear sense of direction along one's career path and adaptive functioning have been well supported in career development research overseas (e.g., Arnold, 1989; Chiu, 1990) and in New Zealand (e.g., Bloor, 1991; Bloor & Brook, 1993).

5.4.5 The Importance of Exploration

At the centre of the crystallisation and specification process is exploration. Caple (1982) described the phase of exploration in career development as an active process, it is about "extending ourselves out into our environment, sending out scouting parties, testing, evaluating, seeking, searching" (p.190). These are experiences intended to challenge young people to look at themselves, and to look at the opportunities and possible barriers which may impede or cause modification of an intended direction. Exploration also includes the experiences which help a person to weigh up information, including information about self as well as outside sources. The

goal is to provide an informed base upon which to be selective and to make decisions about what is possible.

In Jordaan's (1963) influential essay on career exploration, he suggested that the "most important changes in a person's self-concept come about..... through undistorted hypothesis-testing and experiences which yield new information" (p.63). The importance of access to meaningful, systematic exploratory experiences for crystallisation and specification has been well supported in the research literature (cf., Blustein, 1992). In his review of this research, Blustein made the crucial point that it is not sufficient to assume that individuals reviewing information will necessarily engage in an accurate appraisal, with this having important implications for practitioners assisting individuals in the career exploration process. A predominant theme in the research reviewed by Blustein was the tendency for young people who were not equipped with tools of exploration to engage in distorted hypothesis testing, and in expressing opinions about self and occupations based on stereotypical rather than accurate information.

The effect of information processing biases in career exploration may be particularly troublesome when linked to the corresponding existence of gender, racial and perhaps socioeconomic stereotypes. In this context, the career development literature has provided considerable empirical evidence regarding the pervasive influence of external barriers that inhibit the range of available careers for women (e.g., Fitzgerald, Fassinger & Betz, 1995) and members of racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Fouad & Bingham, 1995). The value of unbiased career exploration for the adolescent then, is seen in the fruits of the effort; the young person exposed to informed exploratory experiences emerges with a clearer and more accurate view of him or herself, both as an individual and in relation to the environment, and a realistic, justified basis for taking decisive action. Thus, high school students who appropriately preface a given path with meaningful, systematic exploration are more likely to stay with the journey and to enjoy the challenges it presents, than those who embark upon a pathway less aware of its purpose or of the resources required.

For the adolescent, the 'exploratory' stage is a developmental process which emerges from childhood experiences, with ideas and dreams based upon what Ginzberg (1971) called the 'subjective' awareness, which captures the naive world

view of the emergent adolescent. During this phase, goals are expressed with little understanding of role requirements, and with little awareness of one's capacity to master the skills that might be required, or the opportunities that might or might not exist to access that role. It is this subjective awareness which is the target of intervention in career exploration (Blustein, 1992).

As their world evolves beyond the world of the family during adolescence, young people are exposed to a wider range of experiences. Moreover, the increased capacity for analysis and reflection that comes about through maturation in the cognitive realm provides scope for a more realistic appraisal of these experiences. Given the access and opportunity to appropriate resources, adolescents can better articulate their needs, interests and capacities, so preferences they make can begin to take into account areas that might enable them accurately to express their likes and to avoid their dislikes.

From the developmental point of view, adolescents begin to narrow the field of options within a range of interests by focusing only on those in which they are capable of doing well. Gottfredson (1981) referred to this process as one of circumscription mediated by the young person's value system and reflecting internalised expectations of self in relation to the world. Super (1957, 1963) viewed the process as a 'dynamic synthesis', rather than a compromise. He described this synthesis as the result of an interaction of the personal needs and resources of the individual and the economic and social demands of the culture. Societal demands, he explained, act on most individuals through the patterning of socialisation. He did note, however, that as individuals mature, they tend to internalise some of society's expectations (expressed, for example, as developmental tasks) and thereby become more self-directive as they begin to develop personal goals.

Thus, toward the end of the 'exploratory' stage, preferences for roles within the learning and work-oriented theatres of secondary school, tertiary education, training or occupation are expected to become quite well defined. People are able to articulate clearly what they would like to do, based on the realistic appraisal of what they are interested in, what they are capable of, and what they believe is available or accessible in the context of their life space, assuming that they have had access to meaningful and systematic exploratory experiences.

5.4.6 Career Maturity

Embedded in the challenge of career choice crystallisation and specification is considerable ambiguity, uncertainty and stress. Within the context of developmental transitions, this is a developmentally 'normal' experience. In a small primer for career practitioners, Caple (1982) referred to this experience as 'the realm of risk' to express the notion that challenges afforded by exploration are just as likely to be perceived as fatalistic as they are an opportunity for growth. Moderating the experience is the individual's readiness to confront the tasks of exploration. Readiness, in this context, refers to the young person's repertoire of resources required successfully to negotiate crystallisation and specification. These qualities were described by Phillips and Blustein (1994) as 'developmental prerequisites', the essence of which is captured by Super's concept of vocational maturity (later, termed 'career maturity'):

[Career Maturity refers to] readiness to cope with the developmental tasks of one's life stage, to make socially required career decisions, and to cope appropriately with the tasks with which society confronts the developing youth and adult ((Super & Jordaan, 1973, p.4).

Development is about change, and for change to be meaningful, the person needs to be ready for it. Readiness, in the context of career development, means having access to the resources required to confront and deal with the demands of the career development task (or tasks) associated with the developmental stage one is at. In this thesis the concept of 'resources' is a broad one, given the ecological framework, and it includes the combination of both our own personal resources and those provided by the environment.

Resources are like tools. In a personal sense, the individual's resources comprise their repertoire of talents, self-awareness, knowledge, skills and the like. As with tools, if the resources were appropriate to the task, then a person would expect a considerable degree of success in confronting and dealing with change. If people did not have the right tools, or if the tools were insufficiently developed, they would likely have considerable difficulty in being able to confront and deal with the tasks demanded by the particular stage of development.

Resources in the environment can range from sources within the young person's everyday life to the more impersonal and often indirect elements embedded in

the values and beliefs of society. Environmental resources conducive to healthy career development during adolescence have been found in research to include such aspects as availability of interpersonal support systems (Blustein, 1994; Blustein, Walbridge, Friedlander & Paladino, 1991; Spokane, 1991; Young, Friesen & Dillabough, 1991); access to professional career guidance and counselling personnel (Bloor & Brook, 1993; Cherry & Gear, 1987b; Mellor, 1994; Parr, 1995; Swanson, 1995); exposure to developmentally appropriate career exploration experiences (Bloor, 1991; Blustein, 1992; Blustein, et al 1991; Blustein & Phillips, 1988; Cherry & Gear, 1987a; Mellor, 1994); and opportunity and access to relevant education, training and employment systems (Ferguson & Miller, 1993; Mellor, 1994; Parr, 1995).

Readiness for crystallisation and specification, or career maturity during the 'exploratory' stage, is considered to include both attitudinal factors, such as planning and experimenting, and cognitive factors, such as decision-making and informational knowledge (Jordaan & Heyde, 1979; Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan & Myers, 1981, 1988). Focusing primarily on this stage, Super and his colleagues (1981, 1988) offered the Career Development Inventory (CDI) to assess career maturity and to guide subsequent career guidance and counselling practice.

The CDI and its target, the readiness of young people to approach and cope with career development challenges of adolescence, originated from the Career Pattern Study. This was a 20-year longitudinal research programme conducted in New York, beginning in 1951 (Jordaan & Heyde, 1979; Jordaan & Super, 1974; Super & Overstreet, 1960; Super, 1983), to identify which variables, in addition to socioeconomic status and intelligence, most affected career development in adolescents and young adults. Through the course of the research, five dimensions of career maturity were identified: (i) planful attitudes toward life stages and tasks; (ii) attitudes toward exploration; (iii) educational and occupational information; (iv) knowledge of decision-making principles and practice; and (v) realism, a concept that Super (1957) originally referred to as 'wisdom of preferences'. Although the variables that constituted these dimensions have been modified and refined (Super, 1983), the basic five dimensions in the theoretical model remain unchanged.

The CDI results from over 30 years of research on career development during adolescence (Savickas, 1990). In the ensuing literature, the construct of readiness has

attracted both support and controversy. Some support for the importance of this construct has come from the findings of the Career Pattern Study, as well as from numerous studies that have related readiness to a variety of personal characteristics, career-related experiences and coping behaviours (see Chartland & Camp, 1991, for a review). In contrast, Savikas (1990) critiqued the construct and measurement of career maturity, highlighting some of the most pressing research needs for the CDI:

“The CDI needs criterion-related research to firmly establish its validity and nomological network..... Practitioners would also benefit from research on the interpretative hypotheses suggested for each CDI scale..... Some revision of the CDI itself to increase scale reliabilities would support work on scale and profile interpretation” (p.393).

The popularity of the notion of readiness in confronting career development tasks is reflected in some interesting conceptual work on the topic. Betz (1988), for example, proposed a path model for the career maturity construct, identifying antecedents (such as the extent of career-related experiences) as well as consequences (for instance interests, preference specification, and consistency over time) of career maturity. Savickas (1993) proposed a classification scheme - stimulus (S), organism (O), response (R), and adjustment (A) - for thinking about career maturity. In the S-O-R-A scheme, *S* refers to career development tasks, *O* refers to those person characteristics (e.g., attitudes) that facilitate the adolescent's coping, *R* refers to coping behaviours (e.g., decision making, planning, and educational and occupational knowledge) that the young person uses to deal with career development tasks, and *A* refers to the outcomes of these coping responses.

The readiness construct has also guided numerous practical applications. By conceptualising the young person in developmental terms, practitioners have concentrated on identifying and meeting the needs of those individuals and groups who are ‘on target’, those whose readiness has lagged, and those whose progress has been disrupted. In this regard, developmental assessment (Super, 1988) serves as a critical practitioner task such that developmental needs can be identified for intervention.

From the developmental point of view, those who are on target at the ‘exploratory’ stage already possess the prerequisite resources to cope with career choice crystallisation and specification; thus, intervention with these adolescents would entail fostering developmental movement. A particularly ingenious example of this in

New Zealand has been the Lampen Work Choice programme (Tselentis, 1997), in which one day is devoted to the participation in the workplace of over 15,000 sixth form students in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The programme was initiated by industry through one of the country's largest human resource enterprises, the Lampen Corporation. Its intention was to foster greater career awareness and expand the range of possible occupational considerations for participating students. These are outcomes realised in many career education programmes in New Zealand secondary schools (cf., Bloor, 1992). However, the Lampen Work Choice day extends the teacher-student and the parent-adolescent interaction explicitly to the exosystem of the world of work, expanding the interaction between these parties so that new meanings and possibilities around career options are generated. Other, more systematic examples can be found in the efforts of career educators to supply young people with an array of information and experiences that will foster their planfulness, exploration, and decision-making (e.g., Blustein & Phillips, 1988; Cherry & Gear, 1987a; Lokan, 1984; Mellor, 1994).

Where careful assessment suggests that an individual's readiness is less than optimal, intervention would be directed to remediating these aspects of the young person's resources which are insufficient or inadequate. Interventions designed to improve readiness through classes, workshops, groups and individual and computer-assisted counselling have been widely documented and generally successful (see Phillips, 1992, for a review).

Beyond the task of facilitating career development, systematic information about the young person's readiness serves an important accountability function for career education and guidance services in schools. Toward this end, knowledge of students' levels of career development provides an informed base for planning and evaluation of individual, group and programme interventions (Lokan, 1984).

5.4.7 The Role of Family

Numerous studies have supported the role of family as a primary source of reference for the young person around issues relating to educational and occupational plans (Wilkes, 1985) and parents themselves want to help their children in this domain (Young & Friesen, 1992). As Meeus (1993) pointed out, however, the role of parents may be age-

specific, being less influential as the young person approaches later adolescence. He cited the findings of earlier longitudinal research (Meeus, Raaijmakers & Vollenbergh, 1991; cited in Meeus, 1993) which showed that by about eighteen years of age, the support provided by friends is greater than, or at least as influential as, the support available from parents.

This research was replicated in Meeus' own study (Meeus, 1993) of the factors that influenced occupational identity amongst a sample of 300 Dutch adolescents, whose average age was just over eighteen years. Through analyses of variance, involving school, leisure time and relationships as dependent variables of personal networks with parents and with friends, Meeus found that the young people in his survey considered peers more important referents than parents in career-related matters. Moreover, links between identity formation and personal networks suggested that the social support provided by friends relative to problems at school encouraged development of occupational identity (Meeus, 1993). Thus, the role of parents as a primary source of reference around career-related issues seems to be greatest during mid-adolescence, the stage of development that coincides with the secondary school years in the New Zealand adolescents experience.

One of the most productive lines of research along this path has to do with how family relationships can facilitate career development (Spokane, 1991). As in the ego-identity literature, the tendency amongst career development researchers has been to identify the role of both connectedness and autonomy as important components for adaptive development in the career realm (Blustein, 1994; Blustein & Noumair, 1996).

In considering the significance of relatedness to adaptive development in the career identity process, one relevant concept is the provision of a secure base (Blustein, 1994; Hazen & Shaver, 1990). This notion, which has emerged from the study of attachment relationships, refers to the experience of security and safety in relation to those individuals to whom one feels attached (Bowlby, 1988). The starting point of this position is that to learn about and become competent in the world, one must explore. But, exploration can be onerous and even risky, so it is desirable to have a 'protector' nearby, a haven of safety to which a person can retreat. According to attachment theory, the tendency to form an attachment to a 'protector' and the tendency to explore the environment are innate tendencies regulated by interlocking behavioural systems. The exploration system can function optimally only when the attachment figure is experienced as sufficiently available

and responsive. In other words, attachment needs are primary; they must be met before exploration can proceed normally (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978). The process is particularly relevant to the adolescent situation. In optimal development, the young are thought to derive emotional support from family members and other close relationships as they venture out into the world, thereby allowing more risk taking in their overall exploration of self and environment (Vondracek, et al, 1986).

The theorised link between attachment and exploration is generally well supported in studies of human connectedness in the career realm (Blustein, Walbridge, Friedlander & Paladino, 1991; Hazen & Shafer, 1990). A person is likely to be more comfortable confronting novel and complex career exploration activities if the experience is associated with support, nurturance and instrumental assistance from family and friends (Blustein, et al 1991). In contrast to a dependent approach to career decision-making, individuals who provide the secure base for others do not necessarily resolve the other's internal dilemmas or provide specific solutions. Rather, as the research on attachment and separation has suggested (Josselson, 1988, 1992), the secure base is thought to help individuals attain a state of independent and self-determined functioning through the provision of emotional support. This is supported by research findings which have related activities undertaken by parents in career development programmes to increases in adolescents' sense of agency regarding career (Kush & Cochran, 1993), and parental bonding and career maturity (Palmer & Cochran, 1988). The general outcome theme in these studies seemed to be that if parents were willing to discuss issues openly, if they were open to new information and developments from their children, or if they promoted independent thinking and action, adolescents would be more active in exploration.

An important aspect of family relationships which seems particularly useful in the development of self-knowledge in the career realm is embedded in the concept of mirroring (Blustein, 1994). Mirroring, which has its origins in the field of psychoanalysis (Greenberg, 1974) refers to the experience of having one's needs to feel affirmed, recognised, accepted and appreciated fulfilled. In the identity search process, adequate mirroring would allow a young person to feel affirmed as they experiment with new ideas and value systems. Mirroring in the vocational realm may be exemplified when parents encourage their children to demonstrate newly developed computer skills and when they respond with sincere interest and admiration for their children's emerging talents. Adequate mirroring

would also encourage a young person to internalise self-esteem along with a sense of his or her unique talents (Blustein, 1994). In a relational context in which young people receive sufficiently validating responses from others, they would be more likely to develop self-knowledge, which may also be relatively resistant to the variance of the career development process during adolescence (Caple, 1982).

The role of adequate mirroring in parent-adolescent relationships can be seen in a recent study in Germany (Kracke, 1997) which investigated the relationship between various parental behaviours and adolescents' career exploration. Of particular relevance to this discussion was the close links found between parental attributes of mirroring (including parental authoritative, openness to adolescents' issues, and concern with promoting career exploration) and the extent to which young people engaged in active and purposeful exploration of self and environment in relation to vocational issues. Kracke reported these links through the results of an hierarchical multiple regression analysis with career exploration as the criterion and parental behaviours as predictors. Controlling for the effects of adolescent gender and parental educational background, the resulting Beta coefficients showed the statistically significant roles of authoritative parenting, an individuated parent-adolescent relationship, and parental support for career exploration in the breadth and depth of a young person's exploration of self and environment. Subsequent analysis in relation to the structural variables of parental education and adolescent gender yielded only negligible and statistically insignificant results. Thus, child-centred, supportive and reciprocal parent-adolescent relationships related to more active exploration. Moreover, the role of adequate mirroring in this context held, independent of parental education and the gender of the adolescent.

The authoritative parenting style, which seems to capture the process of mirroring in family dynamics, was initially identified by Baumrind (1989; cited in Kracke, 1997) in her research on parenting styles. Kracke (1997) defined this as "parenting that shows both awareness of needs and high expectations..... [parents] provide a warm family climate, set standards and promote independence" (p.45). Kracke described two characteristics of this parenting style that seem particularly relevant to parental support for adolescent career exploration. The first involved parental awareness of their children's needs and includes parents being loving, responsive and involved. The second comprised parental expectations that their children act in a mature and responsible manner. In support of the notion of the

important role of adequate mirroring in career exploration, is the research literature (cf., Kracke, 1997) on parenting styles which has shown that adolescents from authoritative families tend to be responsible, self-reliant, adaptable, creative, curious and socially competent. As suggested by the career exploration literature (e.g., Blustein, 1992; Blustein & Phillips, 1994; Blustein, Walbridge, Friedlander & Paladino, 1991; Young, Friesen & Dillabough, 1991), these are important personality correlates of successful career exploration.

Some of the ways in which family relationships and dynamics may operate to influence the young person's career development were explored in a narrative analysis (Young, Valach, Paselukho, Dover, Matthes, Paproski & Sankey, 1997) of parent-adolescent conversations on the career theme. In their study, Young, et al (1997) identified three key joint actions: (i) negotiation, (ii) exploration, and (iii) struggle. These subsumed secondary joint actions which included such behaviours as challenging existing beliefs and speculating on possibilities, in the process of constructing a sense of career self-awareness and direction for the young person. The authors defined the negotiation process as "joint actions in which [the parent and adolescent] bargained with each other to reach some agreement" (p.77). They cited an example in one conversation between parent and adolescent in which the bargaining was about boundaries; that is, how much the mother would stay involved in the daughter's education versus how much the daughter was able to assert her own independence.

Exploration, in the context of parent-adolescent conversation, referred to generating and considering information about career possibilities, future goals and the relationship between the parent and the adolescent. Young, et al pointed out that exploring differs from negotiating in that the former is not concerned with reaching specific agreements or solutions. Instead, it "subsumes a range of subordinate joint actions, including clarifying, sharing and evaluating information; speculating; and weighing relative merits" (p.77).

The third process identified, referred to struggle as related to the parent and adolescent engaging in some action in opposition to each other. It included cross-complaining, mutual criticism, verbal fighting, debating and constraining each other. As Young, et al suggested, struggles ensue when issues are not open to negotiation; "frequently, it has to do with incompatible goals between the actors, that is, the parent's

goal of remaining connected versus the adolescent's goal of distancing and separating" (p.77). As an example, they cited a conversation between mother and son engaged in an open and direct interpersonal struggle over establishing the degree of influence each had in making decisions about the son's life:

"Their struggle for control permeated several levels of the relationship including (a) issues of the structure of their joint action implying roles and rules for decision making, (b) developmental issues regarding the son's readiness to take on part-time work, and (c) the evaluation of each other's values" (p.78).

In addition to providing data on the nature of parent-adolescent actions in career-related conversations, the findings of the Young, et al (1997) study further offer empirical support for the general notion of the importance of the family for adolescents' career exploration. In the context of this thesis, family and parenting processes are active, intentional and ongoing processes, and thus clearly an important microsystem in the young person's career development experience.

5.4.8 The role of School

In Super's (1992) view, the high school years are crucial in facilitating the young person's capacity for realism and clarification of career direction. Obviously, school activities constitute the largest and most important aspect of life during middle adolescence. This notion is well supported in the literature on adolescent development. For example, in a review article spanning some thirty years of research, Nurmi (1991) reported that, in planning for the future, adolescents were most preoccupied with their careers in school and work. Thus, education and occupation become more important during adolescence, whilst the importance of leisure time decreases (Nurmi, 1989; cited in Nurmi, 1991).

On a similar theme, other research (e.g., Diekstra, Garnefski, De Heus, De Zwart, Van Praag & Warner, 1991; cited in Meeus, 1993; Hurrelmann, 1990; Mellor, 1994) has supported the notion that school experiences are very important to young people. It seems reasonable to assume that adolescent career development is likewise influenced by school experience. Yet, as noted by Vondracek and Skorikov (1997), in spite of the assumed importance, the role of school experience in adolescent career development has rarely been investigated. The research that is available, however, has generally supported the consequence of exposure to informed exploratory experiences and of the availability of

career guidance personnel to career choice crystallisation and specification (e.g., Blustein, 1992; Blustein, et al 1991; Blustein & Phillips, 1988; Bloor, 1991; Bloor & Brook, 1993; Cherry & Gear, 1987a, 1987b; Kidd & Killeen, 1992; Meeus, 1993; Mellor, 1994; Parr, 1995; Trebilco, 1982; Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997).

That schools are charged with the responsibility for facilitating the career development of students is further supported by the literature reflecting educational policy (e.g., Bloch, 1996) in the career realm. Of relevance to the New Zealand situation is the recently introduced Career Information and Guidance Policy package in secondary schools along with an additional National Administration Guideline which clarifies and formalises the responsibility of schools to provide appropriate career information and guidance for their students. The New Zealand position is supported by a wealth of overseas literature relating to the need for comprehensive career education programmes and the importance of career guidance and counselling services in secondary schools (Byrne & Beaver, 1993; Cherry & Gear, 1989b; Conger, 1995; Kidd & Killeen, 1992; Law, 1993; Mellor, 1994)

Describing the Canadian situation, Conger (1995) argued the need for careers counsellors rather than generalists. In their present capacity in Canada, school counsellors are regarded as generalists who are expected to deal with students' personal crises, timetable changes, educational plans, drop-out prevention, school violence and many other tasks in addition to career guidance and counselling. A recent survey in New Zealand suggested that the situation for guidance counsellors in New Zealand schools is not dissimilar (Miller, et al 1993). In the Canadian survey, Conger (1995) asked school counsellors to indicate factors relating to their own characteristics that impeded their clients' progress in career exploration and planning. The most frequently mentioned impediments to students' progress included stress, frustration and level of counselling skills. Obviously, stress linked to assisting students' career development can be reduced in a variety of ways. Training counsellors to make them more confident in working with young people's career development issues, raising the profile of the service and providing additional support can all be of assistance (Conger, 1995).

Similarly, in his review of policy underpinning careers education and guidance programmes in the United Kingdom, Law (1993) advocated the need for 'careers work', stating "our youngsters have far too little to go on in processing their decisions and transitions through and beyond secondary education" (p.299).

In a survey of former students' opinions of school programmes in Australia, Mellor (1994) identified an overwhelming need for more than just provision of career-related information. A commonly expressed concern expressed in Mellor's survey was that students needed help in forming linkages between their career goals, the subjects they studied at school, and options in the post-school environment. One of the problems with the advice given was that it was frequently provided by teachers who did not know enough about the student, either as a student or a person. According to Mellor, "the advice was either inappropriate or, as a defence against this, very general" (p.41).

In like manner, Byrne and Beavers (1993) from their Australian research drew the conclusion that there was a need in schools for trained career guidance officers, with a primary responsibility for career guidance, a view shared by many career practitioners in New Zealand (e.g., Holmes, 1996). Byrne and Beavers also provided the definition of career 'services', which has since been adopted in the Report of the Careers Information and Guidance Review Panel (RCIGRP, 1995), the government-appointed task force set up to identify career development and service needs in New Zealand (refer Section 4.5, in Chapter Four of this thesis).

The need for specialist career guidance and counselling positions in schools is echoed in recent research in New Zealand (e.g., Cole, 1996; Holmes, 1996; Miller, et al 1993), which has focused largely on the changing role of guidance and counselling in New Zealand schools. Miller, et al (1993), for example, found that school guidance counsellors were spending the greater proportion of their counselling time on crisis and personal counselling in contrast to career-related counselling, and suggested that guidance time had been spread too thinly across a range of guidance staff, raising a serious question about the effectiveness of delivery of guidance services. Importantly, the authors raised the issue of training for guidance staff, given that many of those in the guidance team (e.g., Deans, Form Teachers, Career Advisors, Transition Co-ordinators) with some time allocation out of the guidance 'pool' have no training for the guidance or counselling work that may be expected of them. This concern was a motivating force behind the organisation of New Zealand's first career counselling conference, held in Hamilton in November of 1995 (cf., New Zealand Association of Counsellors, 1996), and directed much of the energy at the Inaugural Careers Conference, an international conference held in Wellington in January 1997.

The national and international climate with regard to career guidance, career counselling and career education in schools was aptly captured in McCowan's (1992) review of the situation in Australian secondary schools:

The paradox is that as the nature of the living and working world of the future becomes less clear, more effort is needed to help students feel that they are equipped to have some control over their destiny, for example, the complexity of the pathways facing students will mean even more preparation and assistance should be forthcoming in the next few years. Unfortunately, career education is in danger of being classified as a luxury item, or misunderstood as the 'quick fix' students have just before leaving school (p.21).

Essentially, what McCowan was referring to, which is also of concern to this writer, is the emergent need for society, and for education in particular, to be appropriately responsive to the changing needs of the young. As the developmental literature has suggested, being responsive to the changing career development needs of adolescents has implications not only for the developmental health and well-being of the young person in the here and now, but also to continued developmental health and well-being during adulthood. As with the case in Australia, and arguably much of the world, recognition in New Zealand of the obligation to be responsive to the career development needs of the young is timely.

For many New Zealand adolescents, changing economic circumstances have introduced a discernible sense of uncertainty and alienation, thus making the development of a positive sense of self difficult. The issue of youth unemployment is a case in point. The most recent data on unemployment in New Zealand (Department of Statistics, 1996) showed 21.5% of young people aged 15 to 19 years who were available for full-time work experienced unemployment, as against only 9.8% of New Zealand men and women over the age of 20 in the same situation. Much energy has been expended in research undertaken to assess the developmental implications of youth unemployment. In a review of the Australian and New Zealand work in this area, Peterson (1996) concluded that:

Collectively, the results.....suggest that there are likely to be adverse psychological consequences for the young Australian or New Zealand school-leaver who is unable to secure a job. Groups of adolescents who differed relatively little while still in school become markedly different after several months of being either employed or unemployed. The employment experience

appears to boost development, while prolonged unemployment can be both emotionally and socially damaging (p.483).

Further to the developmental implications of youth unemployment, is the recent concern about the mental health of New Zealand adolescents generally. The UNICEF report (1993) on 'The Progress of Nations' noted New Zealand's unacceptably high rate of youth suicide, high motor vehicle crash deaths and injury rates, high levels of alcohol and drug use, increasing levels of violence and high rates of sexually transmitted disease and unplanned pregnancy rates. Following the release of these data, Dr Barbara Disley, the then Director of the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation, acknowledged "all these figures combine to paint a picture of a very troubled young people who take unacceptable risks with their health" (Ministry of Health, 1994, p (i)). Dr Disley's concern was reflected in the personal comments of a young New Zealand male survivor of suicide, shared in a recent article on the topic (Welch, 1997):

At this point, the outcome was inevitable. I rationalised death as an escape from what I assumed was the worst life, but what I wanted was to show that I was still in control of my life. Them: the women who rejected me; the university whose system was incapable of acknowledging me; inhuman commerce who would not employ me; my parents who had no understanding of who I really was. I'd show them all with a dramatic departure, prove my life by ending it, by punishing them (p.20).

As indicated in the developmental-contextual perspective, optimal career development occurs when the individual is able to cope with and adapt to changing contexts (Vondracek, et al 1986). A major cause for concern is whether many young New Zealanders can develop a stable career identity and initiate career exploration activities, given the changing economic infrastructure, accompanying high rates of youth unemployment, high levels of youth suicide and continuing youth mental health problems.

It is against this backdrop that the thesis now moves to examine the career development characteristics of a sample of New Zealand secondary school seniors, and to explore perceptions of the contribution that experiences in the school microsystem may have in facilitating healthy movement in this realm of development. A report of an empirical study undertaken to examine these issues is the focus of Part Three.

PART 3

Adolescent Career Development in the Secondary School Environment

An Empirical Case Study

6

Prelude to the Case Study

6.1 Introduction

Developmentally appropriate career assistance at the level of secondary schooling is important for at least two reasons. First, the specification of a career direction is a key developmental task of adolescence. It is an integral part of the identity transformation process during this life stage, a quest for meaning and connectedness extending a sense of self beyond the family system. At this personal level, it makes sense to assist the young in developing the repertoire of career development 'resources' they may require along this journey. At the centre of this process is the possession of an informed knowledge-base, of self awareness and awareness of opportunities and limitations in post-school learning and work environments; and the talents to integrate these two in planning and moving along a given path. At a time when young people face far greater tensions and dilemmas in moving toward adult roles and responsibilities, it is simply not acceptable to allow them to flounder along a path with little purpose and opportunity for career development. Toward this end, a developmentally appropriate careers service must cater for the variability of needs, from basic descriptive information about what qualifications might be required for a particular occupational field, for instance, to more in-depth personal assistance to help resolve personal concerns which may impede progress in career choice crystallisation and specification.

Secondly, it is during the senior years of secondary schooling that many experiences and decisions related to post-secondary school transitions occur. It is, therefore, in the best interests of the country as a whole to ensure that young people are exposed to experiences that will optimise progression in post-school learning and work environments. This means ensuring that career plans and decisions are informed in relation to opportunities and limitations of the labour market. It is indeed antithetical to undertake further education or training, for instance, with little or no

awareness of the occupational implications of the course. On the one hand, the young person is required to invest the resources to commit themselves to a particular course of study or training programme and its requirements, including finance, energy, and very likely, hope for future success in learning and work environments. On the other hand, the nation's education and training systems must pass on the resources and support adequately to meet the needs of their client base and, ultimately, to contribute to the country's economic efficiency. Both the individual and the learning or work environment have much to gain from the young person's informed awareness of post-school pathways.

The school's careers service, then, is at the interface between the needs of the young person and the needs of society. At a time when the country is attempting to balance personal equity with national efficiency, the development of an informed national policy for careers assistance in all of our learning and work environments is timely. Indeed, as Watts (1996) has reasoned, a good careers service is a 'market maker' which he described as being:

A way of making the labour market and the education and training market, work more effectively by ensuring that the individual actors within these markets are fully informed about the range of options and their pros and cons in relation to labour market demand (p.45).

The purpose of the empirical case study section of this thesis is to look more closely at the role of the school setting in relation to the career development needs of a sample of secondary school seniors. This focus is illustrated by the dark shaded area in Figure 6.1. In keeping with the exploratory orientation in ecological research (cf., Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the case study sought to affirm the salience of career development in the young person's overall personal development, and to explore the responsiveness of careers assistance in the secondary school setting.

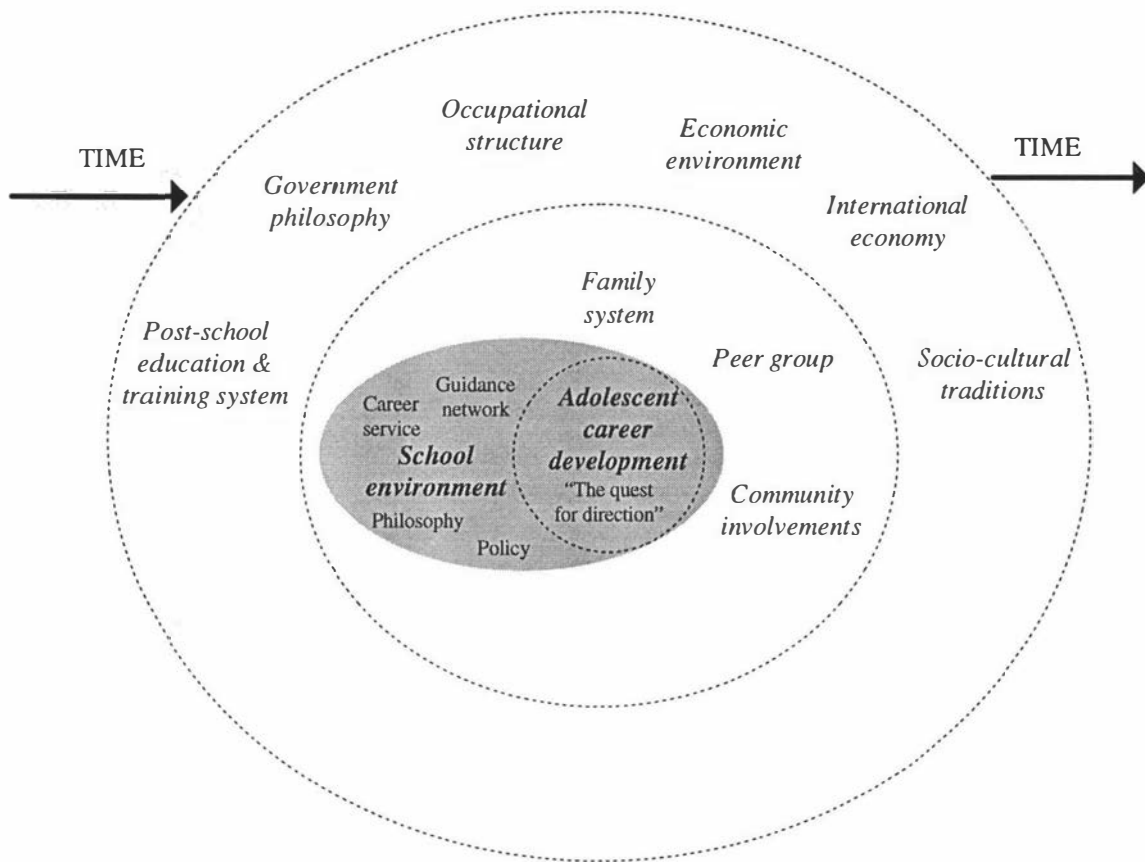


Figure 6.1
Microsystem (school and adolescent career development)
and mesosystem (the relationship between the two)
foci of the empirical investigation.

6.2 Assumptions, Aims and Research Questions

As identified in Chapter One, the value of a developmental contextualist framework is its capacity to guide toward the selection of personal and school variables for analysis and to identify the boundaries around the generalisability of findings. Adopting this framework was a sensible solution to the impracticality of attempting to include empirical assessments of all the variables, levels and processes that might be conceptually relevant in an ecologically-oriented approach to adolescent career development. Accordingly, the assumptions, goals and research questions guiding the empirical case study were grounded in a conceptual synthesis of the

ecological dimensions interacting with adolescent career development in this country, which comprised Part Two of this thesis.

6.2.1 Assumptions

- (1) Career development is a life-long developmental journey, characterised by a series of 'challenges', each of which presents an opportunity for growth or a place for 'stuckness'.
- (2) The young person's experience of the challenge feeds into later development, with the potential for optimisation, but also the attendant danger of limiting growth later in adult development.
- (3) Moderating the experience of the challenge is the young person's readiness.
- (4) The crystallisation and specification of a career direction represent the developmental challenges of adolescent career development.
- (5) Challenges require the resources for informed self- and environmental exploration to be available to the young person.
- (6) The New Zealand secondary education system has a responsibility to provide access and opportunity for the young person to develop these resources; through the provision of developmentally adequate career information, career guidance, career counselling and career education services.

6.2.2 Aims and Research Questions

With these assumptions in mind, the aims and associated research questions guiding the empirical case study were as follows:

- (1) To identify the nature, philosophy and location of career services in participating schools and examine the objectives, core principles, components and organisational climate in the context of current education policy.
 - (a) What is the existing philosophy regarding careers assistance and how does this fit (i) into the overall school philosophy, and (ii) with related existing education policy?
 - (b) What constitutes the schools' career services, including objectives, core principles, components and organisational climate?

Who is responsible for the schools' career services and how are components of the services integrated in the mainstream curriculum?

(2) To assess and document the career development needs and coping strategies of a sample of senior secondary school students; from the perspectives of students, parents and school staff.

- (a) What are the career development characteristics of participating students?
- (b) What coping strategies do the students employ to deal with career and educational planning and decision-making?
- (c) What do parents consider to be the career development needs of their children?
- (d) What do school staff consider to be the career development needs of their senior students?

(3) To provide informed commentary on the extent to which the careers service provisions in participating schools meets the needs of their senior students.

- (a) What is the relationship between students' career development characteristics and coping strategies, and what does the literature suggest might be the intermediate and longer-term implications for students' career development?
- (b) What do participating students, parents and school staff identify as being areas of (i) strength, and (ii) need for improvement in existing careers service provisions in their schools?

(4) To provide feedback for development and improvement in the nature and delivery of careers assistance in participating schools.

- (a) How might schools improve their careers service programme for senior students?

The methodological strategies adopted to address these aims, along with limitations that define parameters for the generalisability of findings are addressed in Chapter 7. The results of this investigation are then presented and discussed in Chapter 8, which also concludes Part Three of the thesis.

Case Study Methodology

7.1 Introduction

One of the motivations underlying this study was to provide an informed descriptive base to assist policy formulation toward the provision of developmentally appropriate careers assistance in the country's secondary schools. The application of a developmental-contextual framework for the empirical case study section of this thesis prompted the collection and analysis of data from a number of information sources ranging from school policy documentation and records to staff self-reports, student opinion and experience, and expressions of parental expectations. This chapter overviews the process for the present case study, with particular attention to the empirical implications of decisions at the various phases and the defining of associated parameters for the generalisability of findings.

7.2 Research Design

Isaac and Michael (1990) defined the systematic application of social science research procedures within a given social unit interchangeably as 'case' and 'field' study research. A distinguishing feature is the absence of control over any aspect of the environment in which the individual is being observed. It is an approach well suited to research with exploratory and descriptive purposes (Babbie, 1992), the elements of both of which are represented in this study.

Isaac and Michael (1990) saw case and field study research as a particularly useful approach to researching background information for planning later research with more of an explanatory purpose:

Because they [case and field studies] are intensive, they bring to light the important variables, processes, and interactions that deserve more extensive attention. They pioneer new ground and often are the source of fruitful hypotheses for further study (p.48).

These strengths are especially compatible with the overall purpose of this thesis: to contribute towards an informed national policy for meeting the career

development needs of the New Zealand secondary school population. Of particular note is the reference to ‘pioneering new ground’, which is related to adopting a developmental-contextualist frame of reference for this study. As advocated through much of the first half of this thesis, and as captured by the illustration in Figure 1.1, career development occurs within a broad context and this context must be understood and integrated in policy intended for the direction of practice.

The intensive focus of case and field research designs coupled with the realism of being in the field has the reputation for achieving a high degree of internal validity in what is being observed, or, of being able to say ‘what is reported in the school is actually a good representation of what is actually happening in the school’. This very strength, however, is also a limitation in the design. As Isaac and Michael (1990) explained:

They [case and field studies] do not allow valid generalisations to the population from which their units came until the appropriate follow-up research is accomplished, focusing on specific hypotheses and using proper sampling methods (p.48).

In a discussion of this seemingly paradoxical situation in social science research, Nachmias and Nachmias (1981) pointed out that it is generally accepted that the fulfilment of internal validity is more crucial than the attainment of external validity. Nevertheless, the research design in this study no doubt limited the generalisability of findings in relation to the New Zealand secondary school population overall, and whilst this issue will be acknowledged again toward the end of this thesis, it is a matter the reader is advised to keep in mind during the ensuing chapters.

7.3 Participants

7.3.1 Schools

Two state secondary schools comprised the setting for the case study. They represented two of the three state schools located in a moderate-sized city in the lower North Island. The initial intention of the research was to include the three schools as a case study of all state secondary schools in this geographical location. However, the year of the main data collection was to coincide with the trialing of a modular curriculum in the third school, and it was subsequently decided by the principal to be

too demanding on staff and students alike to have an ongoing research project in the school at the same time.

The schools were chosen due to geographical convenience and included on the basis of willingness and capacity to fulfil the information requirements of the research. Travelling distance together with available time were important considerations. The information requirements of the research aims and questions would require an indefinite number of visits to the schools as well as commitment from staff to assist in the simultaneous administration of questionnaires to the senior school in three separate 50 minute blocks during the school year. Although the precise details of the administration were to be negotiated with the schools concerned, this very commitment assumed considerable time and energy on behalf of the staff involved.

7.3.2 Staff

The nature and involvement of staff with the study varied according to the school and to the particular phase of the research process. One school had a separate Transition Education (TE) Department and the coordination of careers assistance was the responsibility of that department. Staff involvement at this school comprised those working directly with the Transition Education (TE) Department, with the Head of that Department (HOD) liaising with the school management, as necessary. In addition to the HOD of the TE department, the staff included a second TE staff member, a TE ancillary (administrative support) person, the school guidance counsellor, the careers adviser, the special needs teacher and the Maori liaison officer. All of these people were involved during the initial phases of the research which covered identifying the nature, philosophy and location of careers services in the school (Aims 1a, 1b & 1c), staff perceptions of their senior students' career development needs (Aim 2d), and of the school's careers service (Aim 3b). The HOD of TE, second TE staff member, TE ancillary, and the school guidance counsellor were also involved with the administration of questionnaires to the senior school.

Careers assistance in the second school was the administrative responsibility of the deputy principal and linked more directly with the school guidance network, including the school careers adviser, the two guidance counsellors, the six senior school deans (two representing each form level in the senior school), and the two staff

responsible for the school transition education class. All of these people contributed to fulfilling the information requirements of the first three aims of the research (specifically, Aims 1a, 1b, 1c, 2d, and 3b). With the exception of the school guidance counsellors, they were also involved, alongside subject teachers, in the administration of questionnaires to senior school students.

7.3.3 Students

An overall picture of the students with regard to factors such as gender, age, form level, ethnic affiliation and socioeconomic background was obtained from responses to the first questionnaire administered to students. Table 7.1 sets out the sample figures relating to the respective form levels of participating students, as this is a feature that will frequently be alluded to in assessing differences amongst responses to various issues in the study.

The survey of students' career development needs, coping strategies and perceptions of the school's career service comprised responses from an overall total of 731 senior students, ranging in age from 14.0 years to 18.4 years. This figure represented 90.6 per cent of all senior students (806 students) on the official roll in the participating schools at the time of the survey. Of the 731 students, 654 sets of data were used in statistical analyses, representing 89.4 per cent of the accessible student pool. Attrition of students was mainly due to absence from school during completion of at least one phase of data collection. A small number (27 students) failed to register any form of identification on completed questionnaires.

Students in Form 5 and Form 6 comprised the bulk of the resulting sample (representing 39.9% and 42.2%, respectively). The sample is characterised by a higher number (n=363) of males, representing 55.5 percent of the sample. This feature is not entirely unexpected as the year of the data collection coincided with the first year that one of the participating schools operated as coeducational, having previously been a single-sex boys' school.

Table 7.1
Form level and sex of participating students

Form level	Male	Female	Total
Form 5	122 (46.7%)	139 (53.2%)	261 (39.9%)
Form 6	175 (63.4%)	101 (36.6%)	276 (42.2%)
Form 7	66 (56.4%)	51 (43.6)	117 (17.9%)
Total	363 (55.5%)	291 (44.5%)	654 (100.0%)

Students came from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Parental occupations were distributed through four categories comprising professional/administrative, white collar, blue collar, and recipients of State Income Support including unemployed, invalid, sickness, and domestic purposes beneficiaries. Whilst the modal category for parental occupation was white collar (31.4%), a similar number of students (29.6% of the sample) came from homes within one of the blue collar trade areas. Slightly less than one quarter of the sample (22.3 %) indicated they resided in homes that were financially dependent on State Income Support.

Over half (59.4%) of the sample identified themselves as New Zealand Caucasian. A further 27.2 percent comprised students who identified as New Zealand Maori. Slightly less than ten percent (9.1%) reported they were of Pacific Island affiliation, the majority (52 students, or 86.6% of this group) of whom specified they were New Zealand born Pacific Islanders. Students of Asian descent comprised 3.2 percent of the sample, whilst the remaining number (6 students) indicated links with Australia, South Africa, Central Europe or North America.

7.3.4 Parents

Further to the staff and students in participating schools, 21 parents of Form 6 students at one school accepted a written invitation to be involved in focus group discussions relating to the career development needs of their child and accompanying beliefs about the role of the school in assisting this development. The perceptions of a representative sample of parents was outside the scope of the study and beyond the resources available to the research. It was decided that the inclusion of focus group

discussions with volunteers from the parents of the sixth form student pool at one school was manageable and would be sufficient to meet the information requirements of the second (2c) and third (3b) aims of the research. Thus the contribution of parents in the focus group is not representative of the views of participating students' parents generally. Nevertheless, it was hoped that the perceptions and opinions expressed would shed some light on the position of this very important influence in the career development of young New Zealanders.

7.4 Data Collection Techniques

7.4.1 School Administrative Records and Documentation

The information necessary to fulfil the aims set down for the case study required a variety of techniques. Written information concerning each school's careers service was given willingly by those involved in providing careers assistance, with the promise that the researcher would check with the schools regarding references to any documentation considered likely to be confidential at the time of the study. Generally, this information comprised relevant policy statements contained in the school charters, curriculum statements together with allied programme plans, and applicable sections of recent ERO reviews in the schools. These sources were most valuable in meeting the information requirements of the first aim of this research; specifically, as a stated record of school philosophy and as a record of the actual objectives of each school's careers service, and generally, as a point of reference in the design of those sections in the third questionnaire administered to students, which related directly to the career services provided.

7.4.2 Privileged Observation or Observer-as-Participant

A second strategy included the 'observer-as-participant' approach, a popular technique in field research (cf., Babbie, 1992) where the researcher is not a 'natural' member of the social environment under investigation. As Crowl (1993) pointed out in his discussion of research in educational settings, in this position the researcher takes on the role of 'privileged observer'. The visibility of the researcher is thought to encourage informed participation, which may be considered of ethical as well as scientific benefit. Certainly, in the case study reported here, the researcher's

identification with research about careers assistance seemed to encourage a continual and somewhat unanticipated number of staff and students to approach her throughout her time in the schools to volunteer their thoughts and opinions on the topic. It was a most helpful approach during the initial stages of this research, which required becoming familiar with the philosophy and place of careers assistance in the participating schools. As Babbie (1992) observed, “field research is a matter of going where the action is and simply watching and listening”, adding, “you can learn a lot merely by being attentive to what’s going on” (p. 293).

Further to the casual volunteering of information from staff and students, other forms of approach in the schools ranged from informal ‘mingling’ with staff members in the school staff room, and chatting with senior students in selected classes, to ‘shadowing’ those staff with a responsibility for careers work in the schools, and the more formal setting up of interviews with school management and guidance teams.

With the exception of scheduled interviews, much of the researcher’s observations and understandings from this ‘participation’ in the school was written in a field journal. This technique was advocated by Babbie (1992) who suggested “the greatest advantage of the field research method is the presence of an observing, thinking researcher on the scene of the action” (p. 297). An attempt was made to record only those experiences considered directly relevant to careers assistance in the school and related references, for instance, to students’ career development and awareness. In most cases it was considered inappropriate to record at the time of contact (for example, during conversation with staff in the school staff room), and effort was made to write down observations as soon as possible afterward. There were exchanges with several staff when it was thought to be of particular value to record verbatim a certain statement or message, and in this case permission was sought to do so at the time. In all instances staff very willingly gave permission to do this, with information recorded anonymously where this was requested.

7.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Scheduled interviews with members of the school management and guidance team were an integral part of the initial phase of the research, and intended as the principle means of identifying the nature, philosophy, location and needs of each

school's career service, and the basis for assessing their impressions of senior students' career development needs. The process of carrying out an interview has a favourable reputation for establishing rapport with research participants (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). This was an important consideration in the design of this case study, which required the trust and cooperation of school staff to approach senior students. It also ensured sufficient access in the school settings to meet the information requirements of the research aims and questions. The semi-structured approach, which has as one of its special strengths flexibility (Babbie, 1992), was considered an appropriate technique for an area of considerable divergence, as is the case with careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools (see the Report of the Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995) whilst at the same time enabling consistency across schools.

Open-ended questions were used initially to identify a staff member's perception of their role in relation to the school generally, and to the provision of careers services in the school in particular. Examples included the following:

“What are you responsible for at [the school]?”

“How would you define your role in relation to [the school's] career service to senior students?”

Further questions targeted a staff member's interpretation of the school's general philosophy and links to their perception of the philosophy surrounding the provision of careers assistance in the senior school. For instance:

“What do you think [the school] believes in relation to its role in educating students?”

“How does the careers service programme provided at [the school] fit with this philosophy?”

Staff members with involvement in the school's career service were asked additional questions regarding the nature and place of careers assistance in the school, the career development needs of senior students, and areas of strength and need for improvement in existing provisions. Such questions included:

“How does [the school] define careers assistance?”

“What do you think are the career development needs of the senior students?”

“What careers assistance is provided to students in the senior school?”

“What do you think are the strengths of the school’s careers service for the seniors?”

“Can you suggest any areas for improvement of [the school’s] careers service at the senior level?”

As is usual with an open-ended approach (cf., Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991), the questions were intended as a stimulus to guide the discussion in the direction of the research aims and questions, and were followed by impromptu probes to elicit depth and scope of responses, as necessary.

All interviews were audio-taped, with the prior permission of the participating staff member, along with written assurance of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. To ensure this confidentiality, the researcher undertook to transcribe all tapes, and this also had the unanticipated benefit of detailed reflection on and increased familiarity with the data. A copy of the transcript was sent to each interviewee together with the original cassette tape of the recorded interview and a ‘Thank You’ letter which also asked respondents to indicate any modifications to their transcript. Of the thirteen staff members involved in scheduled interviews, four returned the transcripts with requests for changes.

Interviews with school management and guidance staff were complemented at times with memoranda, a technique in research most commonly associated with Grounded Theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A memorandum in research is an informal hand-written note, sometimes taken at the time of the interview, or, when this does not seem appropriate, as soon as possible afterward. The purpose of this is to capture thoughts and ideas that emerged from the interview process, and in the case study reported here was considered a valuable technique in guiding the discussion in the direction of the research aims. At the same time memoranda served to identify emergent themes linking to the theoretical context of the research and to signal further investigative possibilities. Thus, this technique not only provided a point of reference for the conceptual analysis of participant responses in the interview but,

also, provided direction for the subsequent development of survey questionnaires intended to capture the experiences and needs of the senior students.

7.4.4 Focus Group Interviews

Focus group methodology (Basch, 1987) was used as the primary exploratory tool in the development of student survey questionnaires. This involved one group of fifteen seventh form students at one of the participating schools, in the year prior to the main student data collection. The purpose of the group was to pilot the development of the survey questionnaires intended for senior students. The focus group technique also guided discussions with two small groups: twelve fifth form students and eighteen sixth and seventh form students, following analysis of each phase of the student data collection. Focus group methodology was also the approach used with a sample of twenty-one parents, with the purpose of accessing parental expectations of the school in relation to their children's career development. The focus group interview is an inductive qualitative technique used to obtain information about feelings and opinions through guided (typically, open-ended) discussion, facilitated by the researcher (Basch, 1987). The emphasis of the focus group interview on participants' own views and experiences is particularly conducive to the phenomenological orientation of a developmental perspective in ecological research.

With regard to the development of student survey questionnaires, pilot students' interpretations of the nature and sources of careers assistance were most helpful with regard to such dimensions as deciding the language and procedures to be used. As an example, members of the seventh form student group were unanimous that 'careers guidance' rather than 'careers service' was more readily identifiable among the student population as the composite of careers assistance in their school. Subsequently, the term 'careers guidance' was used in questionnaires to survey student opinion and experiences, in place of the policy-generated 'careers service'. Another example was the suggestion made by one member initially, and, following discussion, agreed to generally by the whole group, to provide participating students the option of generating a personal codename or sign of identification, as an alternative to their names on questionnaires. The issue was a valid one as the survey questionnaires were to be distributed in three separate phases during the following year and the use of

names (later translated into codes) was to be the chief means of matching students' questionnaires from the three phases. This group member's idea seemed reasonable and, at face value at least, gave participating students a sense of control in assuring the anonymity of their responses.

The purpose of focus discussions with each of the groups of fifth and sixth form students respectively was to extend the expression of certain trends emerging from the results at each of the three phases of data analysis, both as a strategy to assist interpretation of the data, but also as a check to assess the eventual limitations around the generalisability of the findings. Clearly *ad hoc* in nature, this technique related to the external validity of the research design (Conrad & Maul, 1981) and is considered a strength of focus group methodology in exploratory situations (Basch, 1987), as the opportunity to probe beyond given responses "enables the researcher to derive tentative interpretations from [students'] reports of experience rather than from conjecture generated by the researcher" (p.422). As an example, responses to a particular item in the first of three questionnaires administered during the year indicated what was considered to be a phenomenal number (relative to previous research, e.g., McGee & Stanton, 1992) of young people indicating career-related issues as a main source of anxiety in their lives. The item did not allow any clear direction as to whether this unanticipated high number reflected a genuine main source of anxiety or was a symptom of student reactivity to the research process. Reactivity occurs when participants' responses are a reaction to being involved in the study, rather than a reflection of what the respondent really feels or believes. It is considered a major threat to external validity in field research (Conrad & Maul, 1981), especially when participants are fully aware of being involved in the study and this involvement is a novel experience in relation to their usual role in the field. In the case of this study, discussion with focus groups was consistent with the general response of the senior school. This finding is elaborated in the discussion of results in Part Four, Chapter Eight.

7.4.5 Self-Administered Questionnaires

A series of three self-administered questionnaires comprised the chief means of collecting information to address the aims relating to links between career and personal development during adolescence and the young person's interpretation of the school's responsiveness in this process. The questionnaires embodied a combination of items generated specifically for the purpose of this research, as well as psychometric inventories designed to assess theoretical constructs of relevance to the developmental domains under investigation.

In most cases, the questions generated specifically for this study provided the participating student with a range of alternative (closed) responses, one or more of which they were at liberty to indicate. For questions that required students to recall or evaluate past experiences, the closed responses were followed by an open response, to provide the young person the opportunity to express areas not considered by the set response options. This approach was recommended by Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991) who pointed out that respondents may feel that the closed format forces them to choose between given options of which none are quite right. The open-ended option provides space for spontaneity and, as Converse and Presser (1986, cited in Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991) have added, in the process captures modes of expression unique to the group which is the focus of the analysis. Thus, quite apart from the flexibility encouraged, the open response option assures the information elicited is a reflection of the young person's perception of an experience, which is in line with the character of ecological research (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

This collection of assessment 'tools' was arranged for sequential administration in three separate phases during the year, a summary of which is provided in section 7.5. In the meantime, this section continues with an overview of the questionnaires involved in each phase.

7.4.5.1 Phase One: General Information and Personal Characteristics

The first questionnaire was designed to yield descriptive information regarding participating students' demographic characteristics, perceived influences on subject choices, and initial thoughts about future work roles. A final section comprised the Specific Short Form of the Adolescent Coping Scale (ASC) (Frydenberg & Lewis,

1993) which was designed to assess the young person's repertoire of coping in relation to a particular self-nominated concern. This instrument, which reflects characteristics along a range of personal development dimensions, was included in this study as the empirical reference to personal development of participating students.

A copy of the questions designed to ascertain students' demographic characteristics and perceptions regarding subject options and future work roles is reproduced in Section A1.1 of Appendix 1. The Adolescent Coping Scale is a Level *Csp* Category (New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1996) and is available only to NZCER users with the necessary qualifications and case work experience for administration (the researcher is registered for this). A copy cannot, therefore, be reproduced in this report, although a description of the nature of the Scale, alongside its statistical characteristics, is provided in this section.

7.4.5.1.1 Demographic Characteristics

Six questions were included to ascertain students' gender, age, form level, ethnic affiliation and socioeconomic class background. With the exception of form level, information regarding students' demographic characteristics were intended for descriptive purposes, but also as a useful reference point to guide parameters around the generalisability of findings. Students' form level was intended as a grouping variable to guide the analysis of the career and personal development characteristics examined in the research. The assumption that students' form level is a useful grouping variable for this purpose is based on the combination of empirical evidence which has shown career (e.g., Lokan, 1984; Savikas, 1990) and personal (Blustein & Noumair, 1996; Waterman, 1985) development to increase with age, together with the character of the New Zealand secondary education system. Students in this country are allocated to form levels on the basis of their cohort as opposed to such characteristics as ability or achievement, for instance.

7.4.5.1.2 School Subject Choices

Two questions were included to ascertain influences on school subject choice. As a warm-up to the task, the first question asked students to profile their course of study, including the subjects, year level, and qualification link (if any) during the year

of data collection. Also included was a multiple choice question intended to identify reasons for taking the particular course of study. Students were offered a number of responses, including teachers' advice, parents' advice and a possible definite link to future education, training and jobs, among others. The list of possible influences was initially generated in focus group discussion with the seventh form pilot group, and these were followed by a multiple open response category to accommodate reasons not included on the list.

7.4.5.1.3 Thoughts about Future Work Roles

Four questions were included to ascertain students' thoughts about the type of work they would like to do in the future. This section followed a bottleneck sequence (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991) to probe further those students who had an expressed choice. The first was a closed question on whether the student had thought about this topic. Those who indicated they had not were directed to the next section. Students indicating a positive response on this item were asked first, to state the type of work they would like to do, second, to explain why they would like to do this type of work, and, third, to mention any barriers they considered might prevent them from pursuing the particular pathway(s) specified.

7.4.5.1.4 Personal Development

The Adolescent Coping Scale-Specific Short Form (ACS) (Australian Council for Educational Research, 1993) was used as an indicator of students' personal development. The ACS operationalises psychosocial competence, styles of coping with specific life concerns; for example, maintaining good relationships with family members, doing well at school or work, or worrying about the environment.

Coping is conceptualised in terms of three styles: problem-focused coping, coping by reference to others, and non-productive coping. The research edition of the Administrator's Manual (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) for the ACS reported the results of factor analysis with a representative sample of 673 Australian secondary school students which generally supported this differentiation. In 'problem-focused coping', the young person employs strategies which work at solving the problem whilst focusing on the positive, remaining socially connected, and taking care of personal

health and fitness. In 'coping by reference' to others, the young person may turn to other people to help sort out their concerns, ask a professional person for assistance, or pray for spiritual guidance. 'Non-productive coping strategies', which are considered the least constructive in terms of personal health and well-being (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) may include worrying about what might happen, closing oneself off from the problem, putting oneself down, and not letting others know how one feels.

The Administrator's Manual (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) provides a summary of the development and statistical properties of the ACS. Reliability estimates for the items on the Specific Short Form offer good support for the internal consistency and consistency over time (test-retest) of the Scale. Factor analyses (principal components with Oblimin rotation) of the Scale support the existence of the three coping styles, and, therefore, illustrate construct validity. Criterion-related validity (concurrent) is indicated by consistency in the structure of students' responses in a comparative analysis of factor patterns between the Short (18 items) and the Long (79 item) Form of the ACS. Together, available evidence in support of the Scale's reliability and validity provided reasonable assurance that use of the ACS-Specific Short Form in the present study was feasible.

The Specific Short Form of the ACS comprised 19 self-report items, the last of which asks students to write down anything that they do to cope, other than those described in the preceding 18 items. The items are prefaced with a task which asks students to describe their main life concern at present, and which is intended to provide a focus for responses to the ensuing items. Students are instructed to indicate how they might respond to their concern for example, "Shut myself off from the problem so that I can avoid it" (Item 11) by indicating the degree to which the statement is applicable. The rating for each item ranges on a five-point Likert type scale, from '1' ("Doesn't apply or don't do it") to 5 ("Used a great deal"), to indicate the extent to which the student favours the particular approach in dealing with the chosen concern. Scores on items relating to the three styles of coping are grouped and adjusted for the number of items. Higher scores indicate that coping strategies associated with the particular coping style are used a great deal, whilst lower scores indicate these strategies are used less often or not at all.

7.4.5.2 Phase Two: Career Maturity

Items assessing the career maturity dimensions of planfulness, attitude toward career exploration, opportunity awareness and decision-making were derived from the Career Development Inventory-Australia (CDI-A) (Australian Council for Educational Research, 1983). The CDI-A, which in turn was developed from Form 3 of the American version (Super, Forrest, Jordaan, Lindeman, Myers & Thompson, 1981), was designed to assess the career maturity of individuals located within the 'exploratory' and early 'establishment' phases, aligned with Super's (1957, 1963, 1980) conception of career development. The decision to employ the CDI-A as the index of students' career development for the present study was made on the basis that no other measure which would assess the theoretical construct in the New Zealand situation was available at the time of the study. The CDI-A was written for students of similar age, assessed the dimensions being examined, and, because of the relative similarity between Australian and New Zealand society, appeared to be well suited to meet the demands of the aims generated for the empirical case study section of this thesis.

As the CDI-A was developed for use with secondary school students in Australia, changes to the wording of several items were required to match the New Zealand situation. As an example, references to "careers teachers" in the Australian version were changed to "careers adviser or school counsellor" for the present study. As with the ACS, which was used to provide an index of students' personal development, the CDI-A is a Category *Csp* (New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1996) test instrument, and, therefore, cannot be reproduced in this report. A copy of the changes made to the CDI-A is reproduced in Appendix 1, Section A1.2, however.

7.4.5.2.1 CDI-A Scales

The CDI-A consists of four scales, the Career Planning (CP), Career Exploration (CE), World of Work Information (WW), and the Career Decision Making (DM) scales, assessing the specific dimensions of career maturity. Factor analysis at the item, scale and group factor level (Lokan, 1984) indicated that the CP and CE scales, and the WW and DM scales can be combined to yield two group

factors (attitudinal and cognitive) that underlie these dimensions. These 'composite' measures, referred to as the Career Development Attitude (CDA) and the Career Development Knowledge and Skills (CDK) scales, respectively, are reported in the User's Manual (Lokan, 1984) to provide a more general level of information about career development attitudes and knowledge.

A detailed discussion of the reliability and validity studies carried out in the norming of the CDI-A is provided in the User's Manual (Lokan, 1984). Evidence for the content and construct validity of the CDI-A is based on the relation between item content and career development theory, a 2-factor structure that is relatively consistent with theoretical expectations, and expected levels of convergent validity with related measures of identity, motivation and personality. The internal consistency (alpha) of the CP, CE, WW, and DM scales are reported to be .83, .86, .72 and .65 respectively, for Australian secondary school students in the norming sample ranging in age from 15 years to 18 years. Lokan noted that the findings from the validation studies of the CDI-A parallel those obtained in the United States for the American version and are similar to results obtained in the validation of the CDI adapted for other countries. This provided additional support for the use of the CDI-A scales, described here, to provide a reasonable indication of the career development components of interest to the present study.

In preliminary analysis of the data for this study, internal consistency checks were run on the present sample resulting in an alpha coefficient of .81 for the CP scale, .83 for the CE scale, .79 for the WW scale, and .70 for the Decision Making scale. The similarity in the magnitude of the coefficients between the Australian norming sample and the present sample supports the use of the CDI-A, as modified, for this study. As with the Australian sample, the reliability estimates are sufficiently high to indicate the CDI-A has good internal consistency for the present sample, which in turn suggests reasonable confidence that any differences in scores between the form levels in the senior school are likely to be reflecting differences in career development rather than in the CDI-A itself. Basic statistical characteristics of the scales with regard to score range, skewness, mean and variability are provided in Table A2.1 of Appendix 2. Intercorrelations and accompanying indices of statistical significance between the scales are reported in Table 8.2 of Chapter Eight, which documents the results of the

research in the context of the overall aims and research questions identified in Chapter Six. Generally, the pattern of coefficients between the scales was consistent with the theoretical expectation of the CDI-A. All scales were significantly correlated, with the two highest coefficients between the WW and DM (.89) scales, and the CP and CE (.41) scales. The pattern of intercorrelations between the CDI-A scales for the present sample, together with the empirical significance of the coefficients provide support for the construct validity of the CDI-A for this study.

7.4.5.2.2 Occupational Group Preference Form (OGPF)

Included with the CDI-A is a list of 100 occupations arranged in 20 occupational groupings. The User's Manual (Lokan, 1984) stated the list serves "merely as a stimulus for concentrating thoughts" (p.4), and was likewise used in this study as a warm-up for participating students to focus their thoughts when responding to the CDI-A scale items. Several changes to job titles were required (for example, from "Fish and Wildlife Officer" to "Department of Conservation (DOC) Officer", changes are listed in Appendix 1, Section A1.2.

7.4.5.2.3 Career Planning (CP) Scale

The Career Planning (CP) scale assesses students' orientation toward the need for, and usefulness of, career planning. The scale comprises 20 items and covers such aspects as the career planning in which the student has engaged and the extent of that involvement. Examples include talking about career plans with an adult, taking subjects that would help decide on a career direction, and setting aside money to help provide support whilst studying or training for a job. Some of these items ask students to rate their own knowledge of the kind of work they would really like to do, including what people really do on the job, the abilities needed, prerequisite qualifications or training, ways of getting into that occupation and so on. The items contain four to five response categories ranging, for example, from "I have not thought about this at all" to "I have made definite plans and started to carry them out or know what to do to carry them out". These responses are scored in standard Likert summated rating fashion with high scores indicating attention to the importance of looking ahead and making

tentative plans. Lower scores suggest the need for arousal to obtain and use information and for the development of curiosity about careers and the world of work.

7.4.5.2.4 Career Exploration (CP) Scale

The Career Exploration (CP) scale comprises 16 items, the first eight of which ask the student to rate relatives, friends, people in the education, training or occupation direction being considered, teachers, other adults, printed materials and other media as sources of career information. Response options are provided on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “I would be very likely to go to or use this source” to “I would be very unlikely to use this source”. The remaining eight items ask for ratings on the usefulness of the information received from each of those sources. The dimension of career maturity assessed by the CE scale is considered to indicate the quality of the student’s attitudes toward career exploration, with high scores indicating the student is aware of the need for and usefulness of exploring a range of sources in making plans for the future.

7.4.5.2.5 World of Work Information (WW) Scale

The World of Work Information (WW) scale assesses the cognitive dimension of career awareness and knowledge of the world of work, including its mores and occupations. It consists of 24 multiple choice items, eight of which examine knowledge of career development tasks, such as the best way to find out about oneself, the role of careers advisers in schools, and awareness of career patterns in the labour market. The remaining items examine knowledge of the occupational structure, of sample occupations ranging from semi-skilled to professional, and of techniques for getting and holding a job. These items are scored ‘1’ for correct responses, ‘0’ for incorrect responses, and summed so that a high score indicates a student is reasonably informed with regard to the range of occupations open to them and possesses the relevant information on education, training and occupational pathways to aid in their decision-making.

7.4.5.2.6 Career Decision Making (DM) Scale

The Career Decision Making (DM) scale, also cognitive in nature, assesses the student's ability to apply decision-making principles to career-related issues. The DM contains 12 multiple choice items. Each of these items involves a brief case description of an individual confronted with a major career decision, covering a range of educational and occupational levels, and including both traditionally male and traditionally female occupations. As with the items in the WW scale, the DM items are scored dichotomously, as either correct or incorrect. An average to high score indicates the student possesses the skill repertoire to make effective decisions, whilst low scores indicate a need for help in learning strategies for rational decision making, which include being able to identify what the problem is, what information is required for its solution, and so on.

7.4.5.3 Phase Three: School Career Service Experiences

This final questionnaire was intended to provide feedback on students' perception of their school's career service. A copy of this questionnaire is provided as Section A1.3 in Appendix 1. An overall picture of students' plans for the following year were first of all obtained. The question consisted of a number of closed multiple responses listing the most commonly anticipated options, which included continuing on at school, moving on to attend a tertiary education or training course, or looking for employment, among others. An option was also provided for students to check 'Don't know', for those who had yet to decide upon a future path, and this was followed by the open response alternative. A related question, also open-ended, asked students to indicate why they intended to follow the path specified in the previous response.

Four further questions were included to ascertain students' experience of the careers assistance in the school. The first was presented in the form of a matrix comprising components of the school's career service (e.g., discussion with the guidance counsellor, careers adviser, or other teachers, reading books or pamphlets, using the computer-based Quest Database, listening to talks from guest speakers, class lessons, and so on), and focus of assistance (including school subject choices, tertiary education options, and job training pathways). Open-ended response alternatives were included to enable students to record additional types of careers assistance and focal

points not listed in the matrix. This question asked students to indicate the source of careers assistance received at school whilst simultaneously recording in what context this was received.

The second question referred to the careers assistance identified in the matrix, and asked students to specify the form of assistance considered to be the most useful in helping with each of the focal areas. The intention of this question was to assess the extent that careers assistance was acknowledged by students as beneficial in helping them with key transition points in their career development.

The third question in this section consisted of two parts and was designed to ascertain students' views of the careers assistance they received at school. The question opened with a straightforward closed question on whether the respondent felt that the career assistance received could be improved. The second part of the question followed from this, and enlarged upon it, by allowing those who answered positively to the first part to answer an open question on ways that the careers service in their school might be improved.

The final question was an open-ended question inviting students to make any further comments about the careers service at their school. This question was intended to provide students the opportunity to expand on any issues, and to express any feelings or opinions about the school's careers service not covered by the questionnaire.

7.4.6 A Note About Methodological Limitations

The students in this study ranged in age from 14.0 to 18.4 years. Although the accuracy and maturity of their responses should not be called into question merely on the grounds of age - to this writer's knowledge there is no optimum stage in life which confers a greater degree of validity on the self-reporting of behaviour or opinions held, or which renders individuals fit for research inquiries - this factor should be taken into account when considering the reliability of responses. The margin of error inherent in any study which relies on human judgement and objectivity for its sources would apply in regard to this study, and the students concerned generally conveyed a mature and responsible attitude to the survey. Nevertheless, in an attempt to keep possible bias of this nature to a minimum, the wording of the questionnaire and the issues covered

were purposely kept as short and as straightforward as possible, and the style and format of print for the questionnaires were chosen to minimise loss of concentration and maximise interest in completing the questionnaires.

The subject of any study is a matter of choice on the part of the researcher, and as such the frame of reference in which such inquiry takes place is largely a subjective matter. In the present study, the choice of subject, the questions chosen as the framework for the inquiry and the way in which they were couched were inevitably part of a subjective process of selection. As indicated, previous research findings in this area were taken into consideration in the design of several of the assessment tools, however, many of questions contained in the collection of information were drawn from specific information provided by the participating schools' career and transition education staff. The questions, therefore, were largely exploratory and the additional failure to pilot the psychometric instruments (the CDI-A, and the ACS) for the purpose of establishing the validity and reliability for New Zealand secondary school students means that little is known about the extent to which these instruments provide an accurate measure of career development and personal coping for the present sample. Although the questionnaires were screened by members of the school management and guidance network and seem to have high face validity, this in itself does not guarantee that the most appropriate tools were chosen to assess the career development needs and experiences of participating students.

7.5 Data Collection Process

Contact with the schools and the collection of information for the purpose of this study were carried out within the ethical guidelines for educational researchers as set down by the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (1981), and with the formal approval of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The data collection process comprised six phases with the first three of these, which may be considered the 'leg work' for the research, being initiated during the third term of the year prior to assessment of students' career development, coping and perceptions of the schools' careers services. The first phase included initial contact with schools, to specify the terms of reference for the collection and use of information and to safeguard against any possible conflict of interest between parties involved in

the research. The second phase sought to identify the nature and place of the schools' careers service, whilst at the same time appraising the feasibility of the methodology proposed for the following three phases. Toward this end, the process was especially valuable in sorting out details with regard to the procedures for administering the three sets of questionnaires to students. This not only needed to fit in with the school timetable but also required coordination of the entire senior school at three separate phases during the school year. During the third phase, a sample of 15 seventh form students at one of the participating schools met with the researcher for a focus group discussion to pilot questionnaires and procedures relating to senior students for the following year.

Phase four was carried out during the following year and included a survey of the entire senior school through administration of three separate self-report questionnaires. The fifth phase, which was initiated in the second term of the same school year, involved a group of fifth and a combined group of sixth and seventh form students in focus group discussions. The final phase of the research, which took place at the end of the third term, comprised a focus group discussion with a sample of 21 parents on their children's career development needs and the role of the school in this process.

The procedures and methodological considerations for each of these six phases are described more fully in the following sections.

7.5.1 First Contact and Boundary Setting

Initial contact was made to all the state secondary schools (three) in the chosen location during the year prior to the main data collection. The purpose of this contact, made by way of letter to the school principal, was to invite an expression of interest to participate in the empirical case study component of the thesis. Two schools responded positively to this invitation and a meeting was set up between the researcher and the staff member responsible for the careers service in each school, with the intention of clarifying the nature and focus of the study and the school's anticipated role. Once the terms of reference for the study in each school were defined, these were written into a confidential memo to the school (represented by the Principal, Board of Trustees and staff responsible for the school's careers service) which also included a copy of the

research proposal clarifying ethical issues and outlining the respective responsibilities of the researcher and the school. This exercise was undertaken to ensure the boundaries of the research were clear to all parties and thereby to minimise any possible conflict of interest between the researcher and the schools, their students and parents or caregivers.

Most notable amongst the requirements were for the researcher: (i) to have access to and invite all senior school students to participate; (ii) to guarantee this participation was voluntary; (iii) to undertake that any contribution was to be treated as confidential and that all responses would remain anonymous; (iv) to ensure that students were aware of what their participation would involve and what would be done with the information; and (v) to ensure students were aware of the right to withdraw consent at any time during the research without penalty. A further set of requirements ensured the researcher would: (i) consult with the school throughout the course of the research; and (ii) provide written feedback of results and invite comments at all phases. Finally, the memo provided confirmation that the school would have right of veto over any information collected from it and written up for the purpose of the study. This was to be monitored through regular (written) feedback of results to the school.

All staff were informed of the ensuing research in a general letter and this was followed up at a normal staff meeting several days later, to outline the proposed nature of the study and to address any questions or concerns of staff. Details were also provided as to how staff might contact the researcher should they wish to clarify any issues at any time during the research. During the day of the staff meeting the researcher remained at the school, stationed for the most part in the staff common room, with the purpose of being available to talk with staff informally about the research.

7.5.2 Evaluability Assessment

The next phase of the research was based on guidelines set out for an evaluability assessment (Rossi & Freeman, 1993). This is the first step in an evaluation, and although the present research was not an evaluation study, the process was considered valuable in ensuring scientific credibility. The initial focus of the assessment was to define the school's careers service. This had the benefit of assisting

decisions about the appropriateness of the methodology proposed for subsequent steps in the research process, particularly the three-phase questionnaire survey of students for the following year. The assessment process was to be carried out through a variety of means including perusal of school records and related documentation (see section 7.4.1 of this Chapter); being visible in the school and, in the words of Babbie (1992, p.293), “simply watching and listening” (refer section 7.4.2); and through semi-structured interviews with staff members (see section 7.4.3).

7.5.3 Pilot Testing (Student Surveys)

During the final term in the year prior to the student survey, pilot testing of the three questionnaire booklets and administration procedures was carried out with 15 volunteers from the seventh form at one of the schools. The group came together for three separate two-hour blocks over two weeks. The purpose of this was, first, to check the wording, meaning and sequencing of questions that comprised the first and third booklets (see sections 7.4.5.1 and 7.4.5.3); and second, to trial the administration of the CDI-A (section 7.4.5.2), which was to comprise the second questionnaire booklet. The grid-like design of Section C, Question 4 in the third questionnaire booklet (Appendix 1, Section A1.3), which was to assess the nature of careers guidance received by students and the focus of this assistance, was developed during these sessions. As mentioned previously (see section 7.4.4), the group decided that the word ‘careers guidance’ was more likely to be understood as the composite of careers assistance in the school, rather than the usual policy term ‘careers service’, thus prompting a change from ‘service’ to ‘guidance’ in student questionnaires. Section 7.4.4. also outlined the outcome of a discussion on the use of names on questionnaires. The school had previously given their approval for students to record names on the condition that these would be replaced with code numbers for the analysis, with only the researcher having access to the original list of names and matching code numbers. The intention of recording names was to facilitate matching of the three questionnaires, as these were to be administered on three separate occasions through the year. The purpose of replacing names with code numbers was to ensure the anonymity of students. Nevertheless, a concern was raised in group discussion that some students might object to their names being recorded at all, even if assured of confidentiality and

anonymity, and it was agreed by the group that some students might not 'trust' this process. As an alternative it was suggested and agreed that students be given the option of either writing their names or thinking up a code name that they would remember.

The pilot testing was an intensive process and one that proved to be a valuable contribution to the overall procedures to be followed in the student survey. In particular, the preliminary administration provided useful hints regarding the types of problems that could arise during the main survey (for example, reminding students about the purpose of the study; defining what confidentiality meant; going through the booklet and checking that everyone understood what to do prior to starting; and providing a 'fun' problem-solving task for those students who finished the booklet early). The piloting also contributed a useful estimate of the time it would take for participants in the main survey to complete each booklet. There was general agreement within the group that the three-stage administration was appropriate. The general information questions, included in the first booklet (Appendix 1, Section A1.1, Questions 1-10) were not seen to be obtrusive, and the pilot students' interpretation of questions assessing careers guidance experience and perceptions of the service in the school (Appendix 1, Section A1.3) were consistent with the researcher's intent.

As there were only 15 participants in the pilot group it was not possible to run statistical analyses to assess the psychometric properties (for validity and reliability) of the ACS and CDI-A for use in the present study. However, these instruments were assessed by the pilot focus group on the basis of readability and meaning and generally considered to have high face validity.

7.5.4 Student Survey

Students were approached at each school by the researcher during a normal senior assembly in the fourth week of the first term of the following year. They were informed of the study and invited to participate. It was explained that participation was voluntary and that data would be treated as confidential. A sample copy of the three questionnaires was held up in turn as students were briefed on the nature of each and on what would be expected of them should they choose to participate. Further to the survey, students were informed of the simultaneous focus group discussions and

interested fifth, sixth and seventh form students were invited to stay behind with the researcher after assembly to find out more about these.

Prior to the assembly, the researcher had organised for several staff to be available once assembly was over to hand out envelopes containing a written invitation to participate and requesting parental consent to do so. Attention was drawn to these staff (who were positioned at the various exits around the school hall) and students were reminded to collect an envelope on the way out. They were asked to return these consent forms (signed) during form class the following morning. It was stressed that only those students returning signed consent forms would be able to participate.

Finally, it was announced to students that the researcher would be available during certain days over the following weeks should they have any questions or comments about the study, and they were encouraged to get in touch. In one school some space was made available in the transition education suite, and in the other access was provided to a staff work room through which students could readily reach without the undue attention of the staff by way of a side door connecting to a teaching room. Availability and location in each school were posted on noticeboards closest to the administration section of the school. In addition, all senior school form teachers had a list of the days and times when the researcher would be in the school for that week.

The three questionnaires were administered to students in class during their timetabled study period at three points during the year (one week each term). Only students who had returned the signed consent form completed the first and subsequent questionnaires. Prior to each administration the researcher briefed staff supervising these classes to familiarise them with the nature and requirements of the questionnaire and to create consistency in the instructions given to students. As an aid to consistency, these discussion sessions were supplemented with a written copy of 'instructions for administering student questionnaires'. Following a reminder about the study, three main points were stressed for staff to communicate to students: first that students only complete the questionnaire if they wanted to; second, that any response the students made on the questionnaire was treated as confidential; and third, that students could withdraw their questionnaire at any time during the study. In order to encourage visibility of the confidentiality principle the researcher arranged to collect all questionnaires from class, once students had completed them. Completion of each

questionnaire ranged from 30 and 40 minutes (the first and third questionnaire booklet) and 40 to 50 minutes (the second booklet, comprising the CDI-A). Thus, most questionnaires were collected by the researcher before the bell rang.

A particularly important responsibility in research, especially research working with young people, is to safeguard against any possible psychological harm arising from being involved in the study (Posavac & Carey, 1985). Accordingly, during the year of the survey the researcher maintained close contact with the guidance network and the transition education department respectively in each school, specifically for the purpose of building into the study a system for monitoring any personal reactivity by students to the research process. In order to accommodate personal career-related concerns that might have arisen from participation, staff were asked to remind students of the contact people in the school (e.g., the dean, form teacher, careers adviser, guidance counsellor, transition teacher, or any other staff member) as well as the people (e.g., parents, other adults) and organisations (e.g., library, employment service) outside of school should they need help or guidance. Staff were asked to remind students of these resources following each administration.

7.5.5 Focus Group Interviews (Students)

Senior students at one of the schools were invited during assembly to volunteer for focus group interviews for the research. Twelve fifth form students and eighteen sixth and seventh form students responded positively to the invitation and comprised the two student focus groups which met with the researcher following the analysis of each phase of the student survey. They were informed that the purpose of these group meetings was to discuss themes and issues relating to general responses in questionnaires and to give students the chance to extend their thoughts and opinions on these matters. Permission was obtained to audio-tape the discussions, with the following conditions: (i) the audio-taping was for the researcher to have access to verbatim responses to assist in the analysis of questionnaire data; (ii) pseudonyms were to be used in any quotations included in the written research report; (iii) the audio-tapes would be wiped on completion of data analysis. In addition, the fifth form group requested follow-up sessions to listen to their own group discussion. Although no data was used in the research from these follow-up sessions, this opportunity was

considered important in maintaining rapport with the students, and generally helped to create a close group culture which was beneficial to the quality of discussions that followed.

Each group met with the researcher in a designated school class room for two hours during the school day. Meetings took place between three and four weeks after administration of each of the student questionnaires. During the first meeting the preliminary finding concerning a high number of students nominating career-related issues as main life concerns dominated the discussion (refer section 7.4.4). This was extended in the second session, with links to career planning and decision-making issues inspired by the CDI-A. Students' experiences and opinions in relation to careers assistance in the school dominated the third session.

7.5.5 Focus Group Interviews (Parents)

Parents and caregivers of the sixth form students at one school were invited via letter to volunteer for a focus group discussion relating to their children's career development and their expectations of the school in this process. Positive responses were received from fifty-nine parents and caregivers and of these, twenty-one respondents were able to attend the scheduled two hour group meeting on Wednesday evening of the designated week. The focus group meeting took place in the staff room at the school and discussions were audio-taped with the same conditions as those set out for students (refer section 7.5.4). The researcher guided the discussion with impromptu open-ended questions to ascertain parents' views about the salience of career development in their children's life and their perceptions of the role of school and family in facilitating this.

7.6 Analysis of Data

7.6.1 Preliminary Editing

All audio-taped interviews with participating staff (refer section 7.4.3) were transcribed by the researcher and copies were handed back to each interviewee for editing as considered necessary. This data fed into descriptive accounts of the school's careers service, a draft copy of which was shown to the school for comment before being integrated into the present report.

Upon receipt of the student questionnaires, names were blacked out once code names (matched to a master list for each form level) had been recorded. The raw data contained in the questionnaires were then first of all checked, section by section, for missing data, incorrect responses, data out of range, and inconsistent data. The early detection and correction of errors is considered an important first step in the processing of data (Jolliffe, 1986) and certainly research experience has shown that corrections made as a result of errors found during a computer edit are more costly (in terms of time), and troublesome to implement, if checks are not made prior to input of data into the computer. Preliminary checks of the data were also of particular value as a means of getting a feel for the data, in addition to the types of error occurring.

Data from survey questionnaires have long been susceptible to errors resulting from item non-response. A variety of statistical procedures are available to compensate for this, including listwise and pairwise deletion and manual and statistical imputation (Jolliffe, 1986). However, these adjustments also carry with them the possibility of undermining the accuracy of the data. With deletion, for example, such efforts may result in a reduced sample size. Arising from this is the risk of obtaining differences between participants who are deleted and those who are not. Thus, a more strenuous effort was adopted in the present study in an attempt to secure a high item response rate. The preliminary editing was carried out as soon as was practicable after the questionnaires were collected and in cases where an error was considered serious enough to affect the final results, the researcher contacted the student personally in an attempt to sort this out. For example, there were several instances where students had failed to respond to any of Question 10, the ACS relating to coping strategies in the first questionnaire booklet (refer Appendix 1, Section A1.1). In nine cases the students had simply 'not seen' the question and were quite happy to complete the questionnaire. In a further two cases students did not wish to answer that question. In a twelfth case the student was not really committed to being involved in the study and chose to withdraw.

7.6.2 Coding

All three questionnaires consisted mainly of closed multiple choice responses, and in this case, the raw data formed the coded version. This was decided at the time of designing the questionnaire as an attempt to minimise errors, since coding was a manual operation.

In the case of the open responses following some of the closed questions, coding was carried out in the following manner. A sample of 80, 90, and 40 questionnaires from the fifth, sixth and seventh form respectively (representing about one third of participants in each group) was examined individually in order to ascertain the most common responses to an open question, and the most frequent four to six responses were chosen as the coding frame for that question. This system, which was recommended in Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991) for the coding of open responses in large surveys, enabled the classification of responses into groups of similar responses, although to some extent, this also imposed a post-hoc structure on the responses. This was preferable to a pre-coded structure since due to the nature of the questions a precoded structure might have pushed students toward an expected response, or suppressed the real response (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). For example, Question 7, in the third questionnaire booklet (Appendix 1, Section A1.3) requesting students' views on how careers guidance could be improved.

The procedure for quantifying open responses and converting qualitative data into quantitative data inevitably results in some loss of information and in addition the researcher cannot totally avoid some degree of subjectivity entering into the choices of coding categories (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). Further, in some instances, the inferences contained in some responses had at times to be 'moulded' into an already designated similar category. For instance, in the case of responses relating to the anticipation of job satisfaction as a reason for selecting a particular field of work (Question 11b, Appendix 1, Section A1.1) a number of responses indicating a desire for intrinsic rewards, such as working with people, or doing something worthwhile, were included even though job satisfaction as such was not stated.

Where other qualitative data were concerned (e.g., demographic data) the coding category was designated before analysis was carried out, and coding for these questions was similar to the coding of questions asked in the closed form. The

methods involved in the categorisation of responses to these questions are discussed in the relevant sections that follow.

7.6.3 Data Analysis System

Once the data had been coded, and the coding checked, questionnaires were then transferred to the university computer service for input by a trained data input operator. All statistical analyses for the present data were carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 10, (SPSSX) Information Analysis System, available through Massey University Computing Services. All analyses were undertaken by the researcher.

7.6.1 Analysis of Results

The data obtained from the demographic questions included categorical data (gender, ethnic affiliation) and continuous or quasi-continuous data (age, parental socio-economic status). This information was used for descriptive purposes only and univariate statistics were sufficient to provide this information.

With regard to Questions 6 and 7 (Appendix 1, Section A1.1) relating to socioeconomic background in the first questionnaire booklet, parental occupations were initially coded using the Elley-Irving Socioeconomic Index (1985) for males and the Elley-Irving Socioeconomic Index for Female Occupations (1977) for females. The E-I Socioeconomic Index is an index of occupational status. New Zealand occupations are categorised into one of six levels, ranging from professional (Level 1) to unskilled (Level 6). Categorisation of occupations is based on the median educational and income levels of workers in those occupations. The rationale underlying the use of occupational status as a measure of socioeconomic status is based on previous research that has consistently shown a high correlation between occupational level and other social status variables (Elley & Irving, 1985). The authors have also pointed out that occupational level has consistently been found to yield the same kind of relationship as social status with many dependent variables widely used in social science research. The focus on occupations was particularly useful in the present context as it was expected that most young people could report their parents' occupation more accurately than their income or educational

qualifications. For the purpose of the present study, the higher of the two parents' socioeconomic status rating was used as an indication of students' socioeconomic background, which is the usual method employed in educational research (Nash, 1994). To facilitate the interpretation of analyses using this variable, the six point scale used by Elley and Irving was collapsed into three levels, representing professional/administrative (Levels 1 & 2), white collar (Levels 3 & 4), and blue collar (Levels 5 & 6) occupations respectively. In addition a fourth category was created (entitled recipients of State Income Support) to accommodate those on some form of income support. The coding of occupations is a notoriously difficult procedure and inevitably involves some inaccuracies, as do all attempts at quantification of qualitative data. An attempt was made to maintain a high degree of face validity, at least, through consultation with a work colleague. Nevertheless, some subjectivity was inevitably involved in allocating occupations to categories, particularly where the coding of female occupations was concerned. In this case, while the Elley-Irving (1977) listed the great majority of occupations, it did not include all those found in the present study.

An examination of the composition of the sample by form level was included in a preliminary analysis of data. The relative form level of students involved nominal data. Accordingly, the frequency and percentage of students at each level was calculated (see Table 7.1). Subsequent analysis involving this variable was based on the resulting data.

As indicated in Section 7.4.5.3, a series of general questions relating to students' career guidance experiences was included to provide descriptive information in relation to the nature and appropriateness of their school's careers service. The analysis of responses to these questions was carried out in composite (whole sample) as well as in relation to students' form level. The data involved was categorical. Thus, univariate statistics (composite analyses) and contingency analyses (by form level) were considered most suitable in assessing the relationships of interest. Composite results are presented as bar charts in the appropriate section of Chapter 8 (Results and Discussion), whilst the breakdown by form level is provided in Tables A2.6 through to A2.13 in Appendix 2.

Descriptive and univariate statistics were calculated to examine the basic characteristics of the measures of career development and coping. A summary of these statistics, including indices of central tendency, variability is provided in Table A2.1 in Appendix 2.

Discriminant analysis was chosen to assess relationships between form levels and career development and coping. This approach is most suitable for exploring group differences (the dependent variable) with continuous level data (the independent variable) (Klecka, 1980) which is the case with the CDI-A and the ASC used in the present study. Thus, separate discriminant analyses were run on the present data, first, between form level (the grouping variable) and the CDI-A; and, second, between form level and the ACS. In addition, a series of correlation coefficients between the CDI-A scales and ACS coping styles was calculated as an index of relationship between these two dimensions of development.

Establishing this wide ranging set of procedures and analyses was necessary to ensure that (i) the data covered the factors relevant to the study; (ii) were gathered in a manner respectful of the opportunity to have access to the settings and the voluntary participation of participants; and (iii) were open to examination and consideration in the context of the career development concerns comprising the focus of this study. It is this final component that begins to be addressed in Chapter 8.

Results and Discussion

8.1 Introduction

The empirical study was undertaken to provide information about the career development characteristics and experiences of a group of senior secondary school students and to provide feedback to schools on possible directions for improvement of the schools' careers services. This chapter presents results relating to the survey of students' career development characteristics and experiences, discussions with parents regarding the role of the school in this process, the staff interviews and the review of schools' documentation relating to their career services. The results are discussed within the overall framework of the research aims outlined in Chapter Six and in relation to issues around the ecology of adolescent career development in New Zealand, a conceptual synthesis of which comprised Part Two of the thesis.

One of the goals of the study was to assess students' career development needs, and the characteristics of these are presented in the first section of the chapter. The schools' perception of their senior students' career development needs is assessed by way of describing the philosophy and nature of their career services. The themes identified in focus group interviews with the sample group of parents are presented as a discussion of parents' views. The salience of career development issues in the life of participating students is then presented through analysis of reported life concerns and this is followed by an exploration of students' career maturity.

A second goal was to explore the link between students' career development and personal development. This was assessed through investigation of the relationship between career maturity and coping strategies, the results of which are presented and discussed in the second section of this chapter.

The third section of the chapter is concerned with the goal to assess each participating schools' careers services and provide informed feedback for improvement at the senior level. In this section students' self reports of their experiences with the school careers service and suggestions for improvement are described together with appraisals by staff members.

8.2 Senior Secondary School Students' Career Development Needs

8.2.1 School Perceptions

The schools' perceptions of their senior students' career development needs were collected through personal interviews, the review of documentation and general observations in the school settings. Three key themes were targeted, including the schools' philosophy regarding careers assistance, the nature and location of this assistance and personal appraisals of the schools' overall careers services. Each of these themes is discussed in turn, with the first two reported in this section and the third in section 8.3.3.

8.2.1.1 Philosophy

There were no written statements specifically related to an existing philosophy on careers assistance in either school, although staff generally were in agreement that their careers service was consistent with the general school philosophy. Each school's philosophy, which was articulated rather broadly in their School Charter, advocated a 'guidance orientation' the general nature of which was captured in a statement expressed by a member of the management team at one of the schools:

Our school's philosophy is about putting the needs of our students first.

[Member of the school management team].

This was expressed more formally in a statement of the school's philosophy, written in the school prospectus:

The purpose of [the school] is to extend the education, social, cultural and physical potential of each student by offering them the opportunity to celebrate success in a stimulating, challenging and supportive environment in order that they can become confident, valued and contributing citizens of our society.

The guidance orientation in the second school was referred to more directly in their Charter:

The School believes in guiding students during the process of maturing as they seek to find individual answers in areas of intellectual, social, physical, cultural, and spiritual growth; encouraging them to strive for individual excellence in all they do.

8.2.1.2 Nature and Location of the Schools' Careers Services

The first school was linked historically to the vocationally-oriented technical colleges set up for trade-based schooling in the 1930s. Careers assistance at this school was located within the Transition Education Department, an administratively independent department which was also responsible for the coordination of guidance and counselling, health, life skills and special needs. The Transition Coordinator, who had the official title of Head of Department, occupied a management position within the school and was responsible for the various components under the transition umbrella and for the staff members working within these services. Personnel included the transition teacher, transition ancillary staff member, guidance counsellor, careers adviser, special needs teacher and Maori liaison officer.

At the time of the study, the philosophy of transition education in this school was based on the integrated approach which began to emerge in New Zealand toward the close of the 1980s and which was advocated in the Ministry of Education (1990a) handbook for transition teachers, 'Schools in Transition - Strategies for the Future'. This handbook, alongside the 'Working Papers in Transition Education' (Department of Education, 1989a) and 'A Beginner's Guide to Transition Education' (Department of Education, 1989b) were cited as key resources in the school's policy statements regarding the organisation, principles and practice of transition education. The objective for the school's careers service was, likewise, adapted from these sources:

To provide a range of opportunities and experiences which will encourage students to make informed choices about their future education, training and employment options (Extract from school charter).

In the second school, which had its historical roots in the provision of a more classical education, which had best served those moving on to university, careers assistance was located as a service under the guidance umbrella. The coordination of this was the responsibility of the deputy principal. Responsibility was shared between the careers adviser, guidance counsellors, deans and the transition education class teacher, depending upon the particular focus. There were no stated objectives for a careers service, although the careers adviser referred to 'The Gold' (Department of Education, 1985) as a source used for the school's career education programmes, and the transition education class teacher was in possession of 'Schools in Transition -

Strategies for the Future’ and ‘A Beginner’s Guide to Transition Education’, both of which she used to develop the class programme and to guide her practice.

The careers service resources within both schools targeted students’ awareness of career options and of the programmes offered by the school to assist them. At the fourth form level at one school, for example, the Social Studies syllabus included a module on ‘Careers’. This module coincided with a period during the school year when fourth form students were actively encouraged to consider fifth form subject options and their parents to discuss with teachers the range of options available at the fifth form level. This also included an evening at the school where displays illustrating fifth form subjects leading to different educational and occupational paths were also provided. Similar provision was offered at the second school which also had ‘Try a Trade Day’ targeted toward fourth form girls with the intention of encouraging them to think about non-traditional career pathways. In this school, class discussions with the careers adviser were also offered at the fourth form level and this was supplemented toward the end of the year with individual interviews with teachers designated as ‘course counsellors’ to assist with fifth form course planning.

Perhaps the most ‘visible’ component of the careers service within each school was the provision of the Careers Resource Room, located in the centre court of one school and the Careers Office which was situated in the Library foyer at the second school. Along with noticeboards and regular guest speakers, these sources were generally accessible to all sectors of the school, as was the availability of the school careers adviser and guidance counsellors with whom students were encouraged to make appointments should they wish to see someone regarding career information, career advice or career counselling. The visibility and seemingly ‘open access’ to careers information and advice in the schools would seem to communicate to students that links to future education, training and work are an integral part of their secondary education experience, a concept recognised in the policy arena as the ‘seamless’ education system (Smith, 1993b), and representing a value which captures much of the motivation underlying the reform of post-compulsory education and training since the mid 1980s (refer to section 3.4, Chapter Three).

As well as raising awareness, careers-related activities within both schools were intended to motivate and focus students on the need to think about their options for

the future. This was a particular feature of the assistance targeting sixth and seventh form students and was evident in the provision of 'job shadowing' and 'work experience', LINK, Open Polytechnic courses, and of field trips to various further education and training institutions when students were encouraged to link their current experiences to future plans. These experiences may be grouped under the umbrella of work exploration (Bloor, 1992; Watts, 1983;) and, as Watts (1983) pointed out, serve a number of developmental purposes for the young person which include increasing awareness of the link between school and future career journeys; providing the opportunity to develop life skills, knowledge and understanding of self and of how 'the world' works; and orienting students toward realistic appraisals for career transitions.

In both schools, work exploration activities were offered as part of individualised student programmes, consistent with policy recommended for this area (Department of Education, 1989b; Ministry of Education, 1990b, 1992), although some aspects, such as work experience and Open Polytechnic courses were available at one school through the sixth form Transition Education class only. This class, which was offered as an alternative one year programme within the school, attracted those students intending to leave school and enter the workforce or link up with specific industry-based training. Many of the themes recommended in 'Working Papers in Transition Education' were covered in this programme. This included formal classes as well as one day per week of work experience. Students covered units on self-appraisal, job sources, job-seeking skills and the workplace. A similar programme was offered at the other school, although as a sixth form subject option and, therefore, as an integral rather than an alternative option for senior students at the school. In addition to vocationally-oriented activities, the class covered units on health and safety, and general life skills (for example, independent living, finance, insurance and the law).

In the main, the focus of careers assistance in both schools was on the provision of information regarding options in school and beyond, plus the provision of exploratory activities aimed at facilitating students' readiness for making decisions and taking steps toward future education, training and employment pathways. This focus was consistent with the need for active exploration, characterising career development during adolescence (Erikson, 1968; Jordaan, 1963; Super, 1957, 1963, 1983) which is necessary for the young person to cope constructively with the career development

tasks of crystallisation and specification (Blustein, 1992; Caple, 1982; Phillips & Blustein, 1994; Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997; Waterman, 1982, 1985). Job shadowing, for example, provides the student an opportunity to explore an occupational preference through observation (Department of Education, 1989b). Field trips to further education and training institutions enables the student to see, first hand, a possible means toward a particular career goal (Watts, 1983). LINK and Open Polytechnic courses give students experience in further education settings and, at the same time, an opportunity to enhance their repertoire of knowledge related to an industry of interest (Department of Education, 1988). Finally, the career module and accompanying class discussion with careers advisers, together with the evening arranged for fourth form students and their parents, afforded students the opportunity to increase their awareness of the possible educational and occupational implications of courses undertaken in the fifth form and beyond (Watts, 1983).

8.2.2 Parents' Perceptions

It is widely accepted that the family plays an important role in the career development of their children (Blustein et al, 1991; Meeus, 1993; Spokane, 1991; Trusty & Watts, 1996; Wilkes, 1985; Young, et al 1997). Young people seek parental advice in such areas as career planning (Meeus, 1993) particularly when long-term goals are involved (Spokane, 1991). In the particular circumstances of the study described here, a group of 21 parents of sixth form students at one of the participating schools volunteered to participate in a focus group discussion of their child's career development needs and their expectations of the school in this process. Two key themes were identified by parents as worthy of discussion with regard to these issues. The first related to recognition of changes in society and the accompanying diversity of challenges presented to young people. One dimension of this point related to the need for young people to be cognisant of the link between their school experiences and future possibilities, the essence of which was captured in the following statements:

There's so much choice out there for kids these days, I think its important that kids know the link between what they're doing at school and the outside world
[Mother with three sons, 2nd, 5th and 6th Forms].

I know Michael would rather be pumping petrol - he works after school as the casual forecourt assistant - or doing 'nothing' with his mates, so how do you

get the message across about how important it is to get a good mark in maths because maths is generic isn't it? All he sees is homework and project work and it's all unpaid work to him and I can see his point, but how do I get him to see mine? [Mother, one daughter 4th Form, one son, 6th Form]

Within the context of this discussion, parents were generally in agreement that schools have a responsibility to encourage this link:

Education is all about variety isn't it? And about giving things a go.....An education shouldn't be just concentration on the schooling side..... [Father, two daughters, 6th and 7th Forms]

This example mirrored research in this area which has shown careers work in schools and people working in high school seniors' fields of interest are perceived by parents as extremely valuable and viable careers resources for their children (Trusty & Watts, 1996). In the case of the present study, parents considered careers information and advice to be especially instrumental in this process. A rather perceptive comment by one parent captured this well:

It's all about opportunity.....I mean, I can give my daughter all of the information she wants to know about [my profession] because it's what I do, but I can't give her the same quality of advice about a dozen other areas she might be better suited for.....Choice is all about knowing the different options and how to sort out the pros and the cons of the different options..... She doesn't have choice if all she knows about is what I do. [Father, one daughter, 6th Form]

The second theme discussed by the group related to parents' awareness of, and involvement with, their school's careers service. Much time was spent with this theme on identifying and clarifying components of this service and there was consensus on the point that the school needed to have a clear policy regarding careers assistance, including what the school provided, to whom it was available, and at what point parents were expected to be involved if at all. Parents were well aware of the school's Careers Office and generally considered the school to have a well resourced careers information base. At least two thirds of the group had had some contact with the Careers Adviser or Form Deans in relation to their children's school subject options or plans beyond school. Within this context it was not so much access to information about options, but how young people use

this information in career planning, that concerned parents. Such concern was expressed rather despondently by one of the group:

Just last week Melanie was down about what she would do next year..... [and] it's not that she doesn't know what's out there because there's about a dozen things she's interested in and probably quite capable of doing very well in. Its direction she needs, like what are the most appropriate possibilities, the most realistic..... and assurance. She needs to hear from someone who can be objective, someone who knows her, yes, but someone who doesn't have that personal attachment..... [Mother, one daughter, 6th Form]

Although this section is descriptive of a small group of parents' perceptions, several implications for schools were suggested. The parents' considered the school to be an important environment for young people's career exploration and development, and generally were open and encouraging about their children consulting sources outside the family. They also, however, wished to be more directly involved in the process and were clear about wanting to know how to take advantage of sources in the school to assist in their child's career development.

Alongside school experiences, parents are an important influence in the young person's career development and behaviour (Blustein, et al 1991; Kush & Cochran, 1993; Palmer & Cochran, 1988; Vondracek, et al 1986; Young, 1994; Young, et al 1997). Young et al's (1997) analysis of parent-adolescent career conversations showed that parent and family variables involved in career development were active, intentional and ongoing processes. Parents' involvement in structured career development programmes for high school seniors has been linked to increases in career maturity (Palmer & Cochran, 1989) and to the young person's sense of agency regarding a career direction (Kush & Cochran, 1993).

Involving parents in the facilitation of career outcomes has thus been well supported and is certainly in line with the existing philosophical orientation in this country's current educational policy to decentralise administrative responsibility and encourage reciprocal partnerships between school and community in the educative process (refer section 3.4 in Chapter Three, Part Two).

8.2.3 Career Salience among Students

The process of deciding on a career direction is a key developmental task during the secondary school years (Blustein, 1992; Erikson, 1968; Jordaan, 1963; Super, 1957; 1963; 1981). An answer to the career question is generally considered by young people to be the most important in cultivating an identity, or a sense of who they are and where they ‘fit’ in the world (Arnold, 1989; Bloor, 1991; Kroger, 1989; Kroger & Haslett, 1991; Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997; Waterman, 1982, 1985). It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority of young people in this study had entertained ideas about future work roles. Table 8.1 sets out the Form level figures relating to thoughts about career options. Students were asked to indicate whether they had considered the type of work they would like to do in the future. A positive response rate on this issue was very high across all form levels, with close to 85% of students overall reporting they had given some thought to future work roles.

Table 8.1
Thoughts about future work options

Thoughts about career options	Form Level			Total (N=654)
	Form 5 (n=261)	Form 6 (n=276)	Form 7 (n=117)	
YES	207 (79.3) ¹	239 (86.6)	107 (91.4)	553 (84.6) ²
NO	54 (20.7)	37 (13.4)	10 (8.6)	101 (15.4)

1 Figures in brackets represent the percentage response, based on total response at each form level.

2 Final column figures in brackets indicate the percentage response, based on the total (N=654) sample response for this question.

In a related question, students were asked to indicate the type of work they had considered, listing as many jobs as they could remember. Once they were satisfied that the list represented the repertoire of work roles they identified with, students were then asked to indicate their preferred option. Figure 8.1 illustrates responses to this task, which summarises the main preference of 84.6% of students in one of eight broad occupational fields. A break down of this data by form level is provided in Table A2..2, Appendix 2.

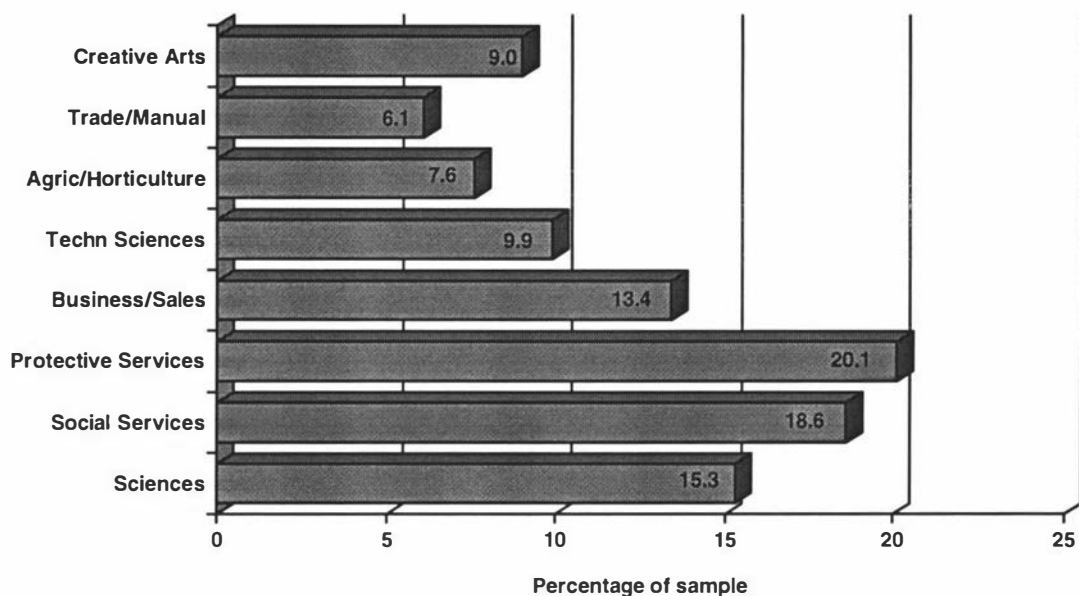


Figure 8.1
Occupational field of most preferred job

From Figure 8.1, it is evident that by far the most popular fields of work considered by students in this survey were in the service industry, which included the social service area made up of education, health and welfare, and protective service occupations. The service industry (social and protective), included such occupations as Police, Traffic, and Army personnel, School Teaching, Childcare, General Practice, Midwifery, Nursing and Nannying, among others, and captured the most preferred work option for well over one third (38.7%) of the total sample.

The response rate within the area of science, including physical and applied sciences alongside the closely related technical sciences, was also noteworthy. A little over twenty five percent (25.2%) of students expressed interest in such future work roles as Engineer (all types), Systems Analyst, Computer Programmer, Architect, and Airline Pilot.

Work located in the areas of Business and Sales represented the third most preferred category, with around thirteen percent (13.4%) of students citing preferences in such areas as Real Estate, Hospitality, Tourism, Advertising, Accountancy and a variety of small business owner/operator ventures.

A further distinctive field of preferred work for students was that of entertainment and creative arts. This field, which included, among others, such occupations as Musician, Actor, Musical Entertainer and Script Writer captured the interests of nine percent of the sample. The popularity of work in this field, expressed particularly by students in Form 7 (20.1%), was perhaps a reflection of the provision of a School of Music at one of the participating schools.

The remaining students indicated a preference for work in more conventional areas of the New Zealand economy. Forty-two students (7.6%) aspired to work in farming or horticulture. A similar number (6.1%) indicated a preference for work in a Trade (e.g., Motor mechanic, Carpenter, Electrician, Fashion Designer).

Overall, the majority of young people in this survey indicated a preference for service-oriented work and, within the occupational groupings, toward work roles requiring more than secondary school level qualifications. Their aspirations were in line with the existing trend toward a service-based work-force, and the demand for highly skilled and educated workers in New Zealand (Haines & Callister, 1989). The career plans of many in this survey extended beyond their secondary school experience to include further education or training, a value mirrored by recent legislation to encourage participation of young people in post compulsory education and training (Learning for Life II, 1989; Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b; O'Rourke & Hood, 1992; Smith 1993b). The pattern of preference was economically reassuring. Young people seemed to be aspiring to occupational fields and work roles aligned with predicted areas of growth in the New Zealand economy.

A separate dimension in the salience of career issues in the life of the young was reflected by the configuration in Figure 8.2, which summarises the main concern expressed by students (Table A2.3, Appendix 2).

The previous analysis showed that possible future work roles were prevalent in the thoughts of most of the senior students in this survey, even though entry to the workforce would be delayed for the majority as they moved on to further education and training to attain the requisite qualifications and experience. This focus was further heightened by the pattern of responses in Figure 8.2, which shows that career development issues were the source of much anxiety in the lives of many participating students.

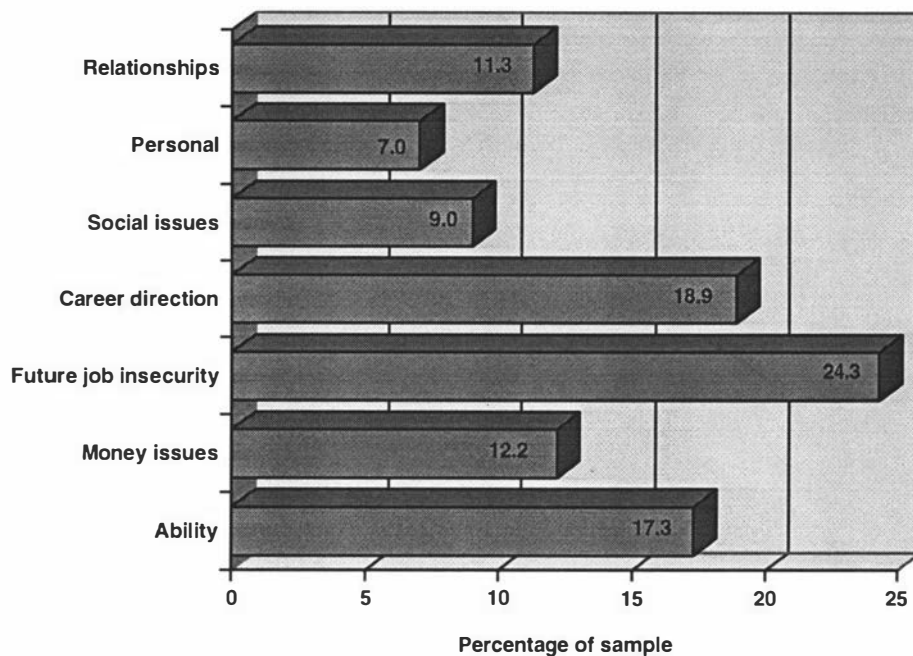


Figure 8.2
Students' main concern in life

As shown in the above figure, close to two-thirds (60.3%) of students indicated that issues related to existing or future career-related matters were the biggest worry in their life at the time. The bulk of this group (24.3%) expressed some concern about future job insecurity (unemployment), many of whom indicated they worried about the competition for jobs even after spending considerable time and money acquiring higher qualifications or training for specific areas. The matter was also a key theme identified by students in the sixth and seventh form focus group discussion. Matt was one of this group, many of whom, although clear about the likely benefits of post-secondary school qualifications, expressed a sense of ambivalence toward this path:

Yea, they're all saying we're not going anywhere if we don't have the qualifications.....how do we know if 'anywhere' is going to be there when we do get them [qualifications]?

Scepticism shadowed Natalie's post-school plans also:

....three years minimum and all that money and there's no guarantee that there'll be a teaching job at the end of it. I'd like to be guaranteed that there's going to be a job for me when I get my degree.

Concern about issues to do specifically with post-school destination, some of which hinted at a sense of diffusion around possible options, also featured highly in the life of participating students, with slightly greater concern expressed by students in Form 7 (19.6%) and Form 6 (19.5%), than for those in Form 5 (17.6%). The anxiety around this topic was readily apparent in student focus group discussions. In response to an exercise to encourage participants to project themselves into the future, Mandy, a seventh form student, expressed an emptiness reflected by many of the 18.9% of all students represented in this category:

...I can't see myself in ten years time, not even five years.....actually, I can't even see myself next year.....it stresses me out big time.

Chris, another member of the group, although somewhat more concrete in his plans, related a similar message:

I know I'd like to work with computers, programming, I think..... University's not really an option.....I don't think..... I'm not sure, I'll probably have a go at the Certificate at the Polytech, Mum wants me to go to the Polytech, I don't know, yea, it worries me, like, I can't make my mind up.....I'll probably start off at the Polytech and yea, do computing or something, until I can sort it out.....

A sizeable number of respondents (17.3%), reported that they were worried about grades, reflecting a common concern about achieving sufficiently well to enable them access to the next level of education. Again, the year in which students were studying influenced the degree of anxiety around this issue, with students in the beginning of their senior years disclosing more concern about grades than those in their final year at high school.

A smaller number of respondents (12.2%) indicated distress around issues to do with money, with many in this group disclosing apprehension about financing further education or training endeavours. This issue was considerably more evident in the thinking of those in their final year of study (17.0%), for whom the reality of leaving school and moving on was considerably closer.

The remaining categories expressed by students captured concerns less directly linked to issues of career. The majority in this group (11.3%) communicated concern

around relationships, including family and friends, some of which were linked to problems in trying to balance parental wishes with conflicting peer expectations. Social and ethical issues represented a further dimension of anxiety for a number of young people in the survey (9.0%), and these varied widely from concern about friends using drugs to more global concerns about the destruction of the environment and fear of nuclear annihilation. The remaining category, encompassing seven percent of students, included matters to do with personal development, most of which related to issues about self-image.

There are a combination of forces that motivate and perhaps pressure students to give high priority to career-choice concerns. Many in the students were approaching the reality of leaving the familiarity and predictability of an environment they had experienced for the past four or five years. The movement from adolescent dependent school life, to adult independent post-school life involves considerable changes in behavioural requirements, sense of self, responsibilities, interpersonal relationships and social interactions and expectations (Blustein, et al 1991; Lee Shain & Farber, 1989; Marcia, 1980; Simpson, et al 1980). Having a 'fixed point' at a time of change could be beneficial to the emergent young person's well-being, and solving issues around a career direction might provide such a fixed point. The personal and future social benefits of having such a 'fixed point' are well-supported by the existing research which has shown that those who leave high school in pursuit of an informed career path are better able to cope with the demands of post-school life (Arnold, 1989; Bloor & Brook, 1993; Furlong & Spearman, 1991; Mellor, 1994). Such individuals reported a greater sense of personal esteem and confidence, were much happier with life, and less anxious than their counterparts who undertook a post-school path with less clarity and certainty of direction.

The advantage of having a fixed-point at the time of transition extends beyond the personal and social outcomes to encompass economic repercussions (Watts, 1996). Recent legislation in New Zealand expects young New Zealanders to take full financial responsibility for themselves on finishing high school, if they have no plans for post-school education or training (e.g., see Creech, 1997). Most New Zealand adolescents who go on to post-compulsory education or vocational training are also expected to pay some or all of their educational or training and living expenses. Being aware of the 'costs' and 'benefits'

of a particular pathway may serve to justify the time and expense committed to a post-school path. Embarking upon a well-informed pathway in the post-school environment also assumes a sense of personal control, the key 'quality' that Lauder, Hughes and Brown (1991) argued is required to maximise the base of talent and resources required of a 'modernised, high technological economy'.

8.2.4 Career Maturity

The concept of 'career maturity' refers to students' readiness to make key career-related decisions around school subject options and post-school education, training and work options (Super & Jordaan, 1973). The qualities captured by the concept involve being aware of who one is, of where one wants to go, and of how to get there (Super, 1990). Young people who are coping effectively with the process of deciding on a post-school career direction are aware of the need to plan ahead for the future, and have accepted responsibility for and made (or be in the process of making) plans related to post-school career journeys. They are expected to have some understanding of their own abilities and interests, work-related values and needs; to possess common knowledge about the world of work, for instance, understanding that the first job is not likely to be the only job, in addition to information about preferred occupational areas; and to demonstrate competence in integrating these factors to make well-informed decisions.

This section was intended to ascertain the extent to which students possessed the qualities required to make key career-related decisions in relation to pathways through school and post-school options. The dimensions of career development assessed in this research were based on the CDI-A (Australian Council for Educational Research, 1983) and included career planning orientation, exploratory experiences, awareness and knowledge of the world of work and decision-making skills. The basic statistical characteristics of each dimension are summarised in Table A2.1 of Appendix 2. The following Table (Table 8.2) reports intercorrelations among the dimensions of career maturity assessed in this study.

Table 8.2
Relationships among career maturity variables

	Exploratory behaviour	Occupational awareness	Decision- making ability
Planning orientation	.41**	.29**	.28**
Exploratory behaviour		.35**	.19*
Occupational awareness			.89**

* Statistically significant at the .05 alpha level

** Statistically significant at the .01 alpha level

Identifying the statistical relationship among scores on the measures of career development is useful as it helps to locate their relative role as indicators of career maturity. With this in mind, the statistical pattern of relationships between the career development variables was conceptually reasonable, with the two highest coefficients consistent with the theory underlying the career maturity construct. In the first of these, planning orientation and exploratory behaviour (.41) are attitudinal dimensions of career maturity whilst occupational awareness and decision-making ability (.89) incorporate the cognitive elements. Accordingly, lower, and not necessarily significant, coefficients will be expected between the attitudinal and cognitive variables since these are related, but not equivalent, constructs. This assumption was well supported by the pattern of coefficients shown in Table 8.2. Here, students' relative awareness of the world of work was linked to the extent to which they had invested in thoughtful exploration (.35) and to their progress in forming coherent career plans (.29). Also noticeable, although comparatively weaker, is the relationship of decision-making to planning orientation (.28), and to exploratory behaviour (.19).

In the following analysis, students' career development characteristics are considered in the context of their form level. The chief method for analysing group differences with continuous-level data is discriminant analysis (Klecka, 1980). In discriminant analysis, the dimensions of career development are taken into account simultaneously in relation to their role in differentiating students according to a target (dependent variable) attribute, in this case form level. The aim of the analysis in this instance was to identify the career development characteristics which might be specific to students at each Form level. The first step in the analysis was to see if there was a

relationship worth exploring (Klecka, 1980). This was tested as Chi-square. In the data reported here, a Chi-square value of 16.31 ($df=8$), showed responses on the measures of career maturity differed significantly ($p=0.03$) according to form level. In other words, students' readiness to make decisions around subject options and options relating to post-school pathways differed according to their Form level. This result was not unexpected as career maturity has been found in previous research to differ as a function of age but also, experience (Blustein, et al 1989; Lokan, 1984; Vondracke & Skorikov, 1997; Waterman, 1985). Young people of the same age-group do not necessarily move through phases of career development at equal rates. As a result, learning activities need to differ in terms of breadth, depth, nature and pace. Whilst some may require remediation in terms of acquiring fundamental skills, others need opportunities for enrichment (Blustein, 1992). The results reported here also supported the recommendation of the recent national review of career information and guidance provision in New Zealand secondary, recognising that the career development needs of secondary school students differ within and across the different levels of the school curriculum, with schools undertaking to be responsive to this variance (Report of the Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995).

The analysis thus far established a statistically significant link between career maturity and form level. In order to assess the relative importance of this relationship, it was helpful to examine the canonical correlation coefficient. This coefficient expresses the degree of relationship between the combination of independent variables (career maturity) and the target variable (form level) (Klecka, 1980). In the present study, a coefficient of 0.32 was obtained, which implied a fair degree of association between the two and provided reasonable indication that the relationship between form level and students' career maturity was worth exploring further.

The canonical correlation, however, did not show in what way students at the various form levels of the senior school differed. An examination of the mean discriminant score for each form level on the combination of career development variables provided some direction toward this end. This averaged score is referred to in discriminant analysis as a 'centroid'. For the present data, calculated centroids ranged from -0.20 for students in Form 5, through 0.03 for students in Form 6, and to 0.95 for those in Form 7. The pattern revealed that the career development characteristics of fifth form students were distinct in

relation to students in the sixth form, and both have career development needs appreciably different from those of seventh form students.

Centroids, whilst helpful in identifying the pattern of separation between form levels did not indicate how students' associated career maturity characteristics differed. In order to define more clearly the career development dimensions which separated the fifth form students from the sixth form students, and both fifth and sixth formers from the seventh form group, the independent relationship (structural coefficient) of each dimension to the pattern of separation (discriminant function) was examined. Table 8.3 summarises this information.

Table 8.3
Structural discriminant function coefficients for each of the career development variables in the separation of students at each form level

Career development variable	Structural coefficients
Planning orientation	.94
Exploratory behaviour	.48
World of work knowledge	.35
Decision-making ability	.50

The available literature has expressed a general lack of consensus on how high coefficients must be to be meaningfully interpreted. By convention, coefficients in excess of .30 (9% of variance) have been considered eligible while lower ones have not (Cliff, 1987). Using this criterion for the present data, Table 8.3 shows that all four dimensions of career development contribute to the pattern of separation between students at each form level. An orientation toward planning (.94) appeared the most influential in identifying differences in career maturity of students in the senior school, alongside the ability to make decisions (.50), with relative engagement in exploratory activities (.48) contributing similarly. General awareness of the world of work (.35) appeared more subtle in distinguishing between the career development characteristics of students at each form level.

The information provided in Table 8.3 provides an overall picture as to the relative role each dimension of career maturity has in describing developmental differences between form levels (between-group differences). The career development characteristics of

students within these form levels (within-group differences) is shown in Figure 8.4, which summarises the average score on the dimensions of career maturity (data accompanying this figure is provided by Table A2.4 in Appendix 2).

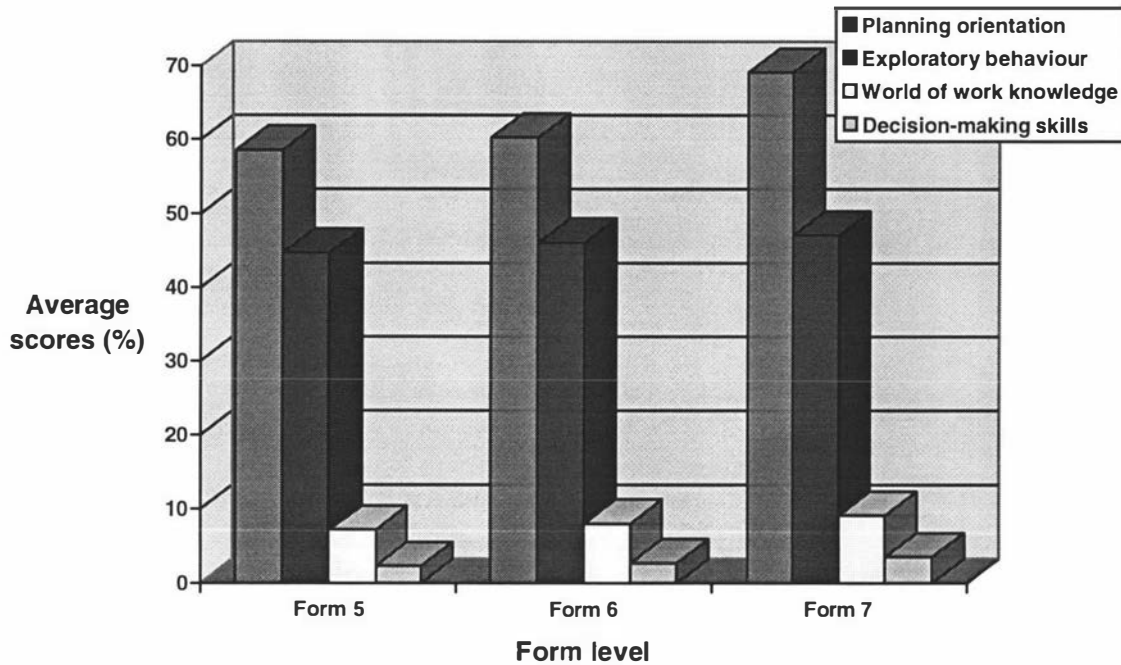


Figure 8.3
Comparison of average scores on indices of career maturity
between students at each Form level

The move toward personal autonomy during adolescence typically exposes the young person to a wider range of experiences (cf., Blustein, 1994). Ongoing cognitive maturation provides greater skill in being able to integrate and apply these experiences to meet existing personal needs and societal expectations, such as through the specification of a career direction (Blustein, et al 1989; Vondracek & Skorikov, 1997; Waterman, 1982, 1985). The pattern of scores shown in Figure 8.3 supports this graduated feature of career development. Sixth form students generally indicated greater attention to career planning (mean 60.39) than those in the fifth form (mean 58.67) group, but were surpassed by the greater energy for career planning activities indicated at the seventh form (mean 69.14) level. A comparable trend is depicted on self reports of career exploration activities. Fifth formers reported less involvement in career exploration (mean 44.73) than their counterparts in the sixth form (mean 46.13) and the seventh form (mean 47.14). Similarly, Figure 8.3 shows sixth formers possessed greater awareness of the world of work (mean

8.00) and better ability to solve career problems (mean 2.72) than those in the fifth form. These aspects of cognitive career maturity were higher still at the seventh form level, with average scores of 9.11 and 3.54 on the dimensions of knowledge and decision-making, respectively.

The CDI-A assesses a young person's readiness to move toward an informed career direction. Typically, an indication of readiness in career development is obtained from comparing responses on measures of career development to age-graded norms. However, since no data existed on such an instrument in New Zealand, it was decided to undertake analysis of a comparable group of Australian adolescents. Data for one such group was provided by the norming sample reported in the CDI-A User's Manual (Lokan, 1984). This data (year group average and index of variability on the CDI-A main scales) is presented as an attachment (shaded area) in Table A2.4 of Appendix 2. For the reasons discussed in section 7.4.6, relating to methodological limitations, it is important to remind the reader of the tentativeness of comparisons with the present data.

The Australian Year 11 group chosen for the analysis was comparable with the Form 6 group (on the basis of age and school year level) in the present sample. Of note in Table A2.4 was the higher average, overall, attained by the Australian sample across all dimensions of career maturity assessed in this study. The Australian (A) and New Zealand (NZ) means on these dimensions were as follows: Career Planning (A: 65.0, NZ: 60.3), Career Exploration (A: 49.4, NZ: 46.1), World of Work Knowledge (A: 18.7, NZ: 8.0), and Career Decision Making skills (A: 8.7, NZ: 2.7). The data suggested, that, compared to their Australian counterparts, the New Zealand sixth formers in this study were not as involved in making educational and occupational plans, knew very little about the nature and requirements of the world of work, and had greater difficulty making career-related (educational and occupational) decisions.

A further comparison of the Australian Year 11 group with the seventh form group in this study was likewise noteworthy. Whereas the New Zealand seventh formers reported greater involvement in career planning (mean 69.1), they were, however, less equipped than their equivalent sixth form Australian counterparts to make 'informed choices' around key career development tasks, such as options related to subject, and post-school education, training and work. Whilst engagement in exploratory activities for the seventh formers in this study was only slightly less than that of their sixth form Australian equivalents, the

disparity in the cognitive dimensions of career maturity were considerably higher. In this instance, the New Zealand seventh formers (mean 9.1) were notably less knowledgeable about the New Zealand occupational structure, sample occupations and techniques for getting and holding a job than Australian Year 11 students were about the Australian working world. Of note also were the apparent shortcomings of the seventh form group in making wise decisions about their own careers, indicated by their lower scores on the CDI-A Career Decision Making scale (mean 3.5), than the Australian group.

8.3 Links to Personal Development

8.3.1 Coping Strategies

Adolescence is a phase in the lifespan when people are confronted by a series of developmental hurdles and challenges, the issue of career being one such challenge (Erikson, 1968; Super, 1981; Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986). From the developmental-contextualist position, the quality of life for the young person unable to cope constructively with worries suffers, as does that of their family. Together these may have adverse effects on the functioning of the broader community generally (Welch, 1997). Moreover, ways in which young people cope may establish patterns for adult life. Indeed, how they go about making plans and preparations for the future is of great social consequence. It is maintained in this research that the career development challenges encountered in adolescence and the capacity of the young person to respond effectively to these have critical implications for adult career development. The processes involved in confronting career development issues during adolescence set in motion patterns for dealing with career-related issues in adulthood, and ultimately have far reaching consequences for national economic planning and development (Watts, 1996).

This section considers one dimension - albeit a very central one - of personal development: the adolescent's coping repertoire, and identifies the way students cope with career development concerns before exploring the link between career maturity and the individual's coping repertoire. In Section 8.1.3, it was shown that for the majority of young people in this survey, concerns around career-related issues represented the source of considerably more anxiety and stress in their life than any other matter. The following analysis, linking coping repertoire to key life concerns, relates to those students who identified key life concerns associated with their career development.

Coping styles, as assessed in this study, ranged through those characterised by ‘reference to others’ in a bid to deal with concerns; what may be termed ‘non-productive’ coping and avoidance strategies empirically associated with an inability to cope; and elements which identify working at ‘solving the problem’ while remaining optimistic, fit, relaxed and socially connected (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993). The coping responses nominated by students as being associated with expressed concerns are summarised in Table A2.5 in Appendix 2. These data are illustrated by the pattern of responses in Figure 8.4, which shows the average responses of students at each form level to the three styles of coping assessed; namely, problem-focused coping, coping by reference to others, and non-productive coping.

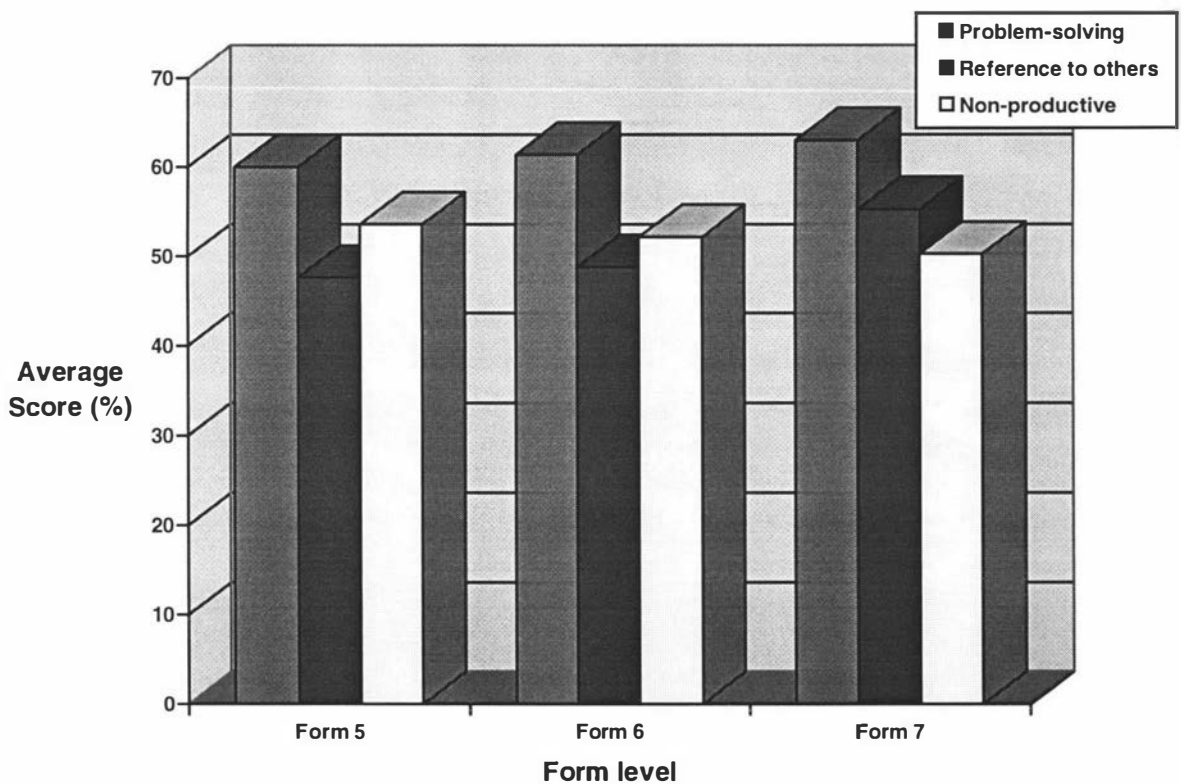


Figure 8.4

Average scores on indices of coping across form level

Figure 8.4 shows the most frequent approach to dealing with career-related concerns amongst the sixth and seventh formers in this study was through working toward solving the problem. A less frequent response, particularly for young people in the

beginning stages of the senior school was to talk with others, and when students did nominate this strategy the target usually was peers rather than professionals. Non-productive strategies, such as worrying about what would happen, closing oneself off from the problem, and not letting others know how they felt were used more often and especially by students in the fifth and sixth form. This latter pattern is particularly important for practitioners. Whilst it is generally considered developmentally normal for young people to be preoccupied with career-related concerns (Blustein, 1992; Dodge, 1990; Waterman, 1985), a limited or undeveloped coping repertoire is developmentally adverse (Caple, 1982). It may be that careers assistance at the fifth and sixth form level within the schools of this study was not meeting the demand for learning experiences to help these young people deal constructively with career problems. The seventh form group, by comparison, were less likely to use non-productive strategies in response to career problems. Could it be that the non-productive responders from the fifth and sixth form were more likely to have left the secondary school system before graduating to the seventh form? The answer should be of particular concern to stake-holders in the tertiary sector. The senior level of the secondary school system has generally been considered the key transition stage to further education and training in New Zealand (Career Information & Guidance Review Panel, 1995; Minister of Education, 1996a; Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b; Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994a, 1994b).

8.3.2 Relationship to Career Maturity

The relationship of coping strategies to career maturity: involving (i) planning, (ii) exploration (iii) awareness and (iv) decision-making ability is expressed in Table 8.4 by the pattern of intercorrelations between the measures of coping and career maturity. It is helpful to focus only on the coefficients which have been assigned an asterisk, indicating that the direction and magnitude of the relationship shown is unlikely to be a chance occurrence (Cliff, 1987), which was the case with the relationship of coping strategies to the first three dimensions of career maturity. The negative sign (-) affiliated with coefficients in this Table suggested the frequency of non-productive coping strategies was inversely related to career maturity. Theoretically, the data suggests that students who tended to apply non-productive coping strategies to career problems were also less likely to

have engaged in useful planning and exploration and to have a limited knowledge of the world of work with which to make key career-related decisions.

Table 8.4
Relationship of coping strategies to career maturity,
expressed as a correlation coefficient

Career Development dimension	Coping strategy		
	Problem solving	Reference to others	Non-productive
Planning orientation	.2416**	.1830*	-.2510**
Exploratory behaviour	.1248*	-.1997*	-.2108**
Occupational awareness	-.0226	.1447*	-.1313*
Decision ability	-.0899	.1784**	.0062

* Statistically significant .05 alpha level

** Statistically significant .01 alpha level

The data in Table 8.4 do not indicate, however, if lower levels of career development encouraged non-productive coping styles or if those with a tendency to respond non-productively had more difficulty developing the qualities of career maturity. Nevertheless, if this coping repertoire were to set the pattern for dealing with career problems later on in adult life, as the literature would suggest (e.g., Bloor & Brook, 1993; Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993; Waterman, 1985; Watts, 1996; Welch, 1997), then the data in Table 8.4 point to a developmentally, socially and economically adverse future for a sizeable number of young people in the survey.

The assumption related above is reinforced by the positive relationships expressed between problem-solving and career development attitudes relating to planning (.24) and exploration (.12). The coefficients illustrated here suggest that students who had given considerable thought to what they might do and who had likewise made use of exploratory opportunities and resources, were more likely to approach career development concerns with a more developmentally appropriate problem-solving orientation.

8.4 Experience of Careers Assistance

Current secondary education policy encourages students to participate at the senior level longer, with the provision of a broad range of options to meet a wider range of needs (Ministry of Education, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c). Likewise, early specialisation and, therefore, likely foreclosure are discouraged in favour of a more comprehensive exploration and accompanying informed specification of direction (Career Information & Guidance Review Panel, 1995; Education Review Office, 1991; Minister of Education, 1995b, 1996; Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994a, 1994b; Rivers, et al 1989). This is consistent with career development theory and research which suggests that secondary school students are in the exploratory stage of career development and, therefore, require systematic and meaningful experiences to ensure informed choices related to preference specification (Bloor & Brook, 1993; Blustein, 1992; Waterman, 1985).

This section of the survey examined the career services offered in participating schools. It was intended to discover, first, the schools' perception of the adequacy of their careers services for the senior school and, second, the extent to which help offered within the programme was acknowledged by students as beneficial in facilitating awareness, and planning for subject options and for future education, training and work roles.

8.4.1 School Perceptions of the Careers Service offered to Senior Students

Staff appraisals of the schools' careers services were collected as part of personal staff interviews, and on-going observation and informal discussions throughout the study. Two themes emerged from the appraisals. The first related to the overall concept of a 'careers service' in the schools, and the second related to existing tasks and responsibilities of those affiliated with the service and the associated issue of resources.

Generally, all staff were in support of the need and importance of an integrated well-coordinated careers service in their school:

Yes, the Careers Office is a valuable asset, as is [the Careers Adviser]..... the whole network of careers help is extremely important and worthwhile and there's definitely a place for an orientation in careers work in the curriculum..... All students from the third to the seventh form need support and guidance regarding their options.....[5th Form Dean].

We have a responsibility to our students, to their families and yes, to this community to provide the best for our students..... A good careers service,

and by that I mean one that can function with the whole school, have the support of all the school, be adequately resourced..... is integral to the guidance orientation of the school.....[Management Staff Member].

I would like to see the development of a student centre for all guidance services, and staffed by full time positions. At the moment we have me, full time, and another counsellor who is only part-time, but really we need two full time counsellors. The careers adviser is officially nine hours per week..... for over 1200 students! This whole area needs developing.....[Counsellor].

I'd like to see a comprehensive career guidance system across the curriculum and linked in with all services at school and beyond. The school could have a data base holding information, including academic records and career options on each student, which could be accessed by staff - this would certainly save time and enable us to redistribute our resources more efficiently [Careers Adviser].

Whilst indications in both schools were that a coordinated and well integrated service was the target for future development of the service in the area, many staff were very clear about existing barriers to this 'ideal'. Some of these barriers were to do with the organisational climate of the school:

I feel very well supported by the guidance team but the subject teachers need educating..... not all..... they resent kids being out of class, they put down the careers work and consider their subject more important. I can empathise with them, but it's not an argument about what is the most important, it's more to do with "how can we best coordinate the curriculum to accommodate the needs of these kids?" Kids' subject work shouldn't be compromised for careers work and careers work shouldn't be compromised for subject work somehow there needs to be integration.....[HOD, Transition Education].

Staff need educating in this area..... currently many of them are up in arms when students are missing from their classes because they are on Skills Pathways, STAR, or learning programmes outside the school. We are putting subjects before individual student needs. Some staff have no comprehension at all about changes in education.....[Careers Adviser, School 1].

It [the school careers service] needs to rate more importantly in the school..... I see kids floundering along in the fifth form who have no idea of what is possible..... they have no goals and therefore no motivation.....[5th Form Dean].

There is a myth that careers work is just giving out information..... staff do not understand the full extent of the job. Some staff won't let students out of class - they put down careers work and consider their subject more important. Little wonder kids don't value careers work [Careers Adviser, School 2].

By far the most commonly identified barrier toward the provision of an integrated and well coordinated careers service in schools was to do with resources. Two key resources were considered most relevant by all staff in both schools. They were first of all, time, and, second, professionalism, with discussion concentrated around issues to do with status in schools and training.

The amount of time allocated to careers assistance in the schools was seen to be the most important resource available and the majority of staff involved with the career service found that time was inadequate to meet the various needs of students. In most cases, the amount of time spent on careers work exceeded that officially allocated, and it was usual for non-contact hours to be used as additional hours for careers assistance. With the exception of the guidance counsellors at one school, all staff involved with the careers service had multiple responsibilities in the school. The responsibilities of the careers adviser at one school, for example, included subject teaching (16 hours per week) with non-contact time (3 hours), in addition to being a Form teacher, the LINK and Open Polytechnic coordinator and careers advising. The careers adviser at the second school was employed part-time in this position and also had responsibilities for special needs teaching. The transition coordinator at this school, whilst responsible for coordinating staff in the department was also allocated subject teaching, non-contact time, coordinating school industry links, LINK, Open Polytechnic, and other learning programmes outside the school, work experience, and writing the new transition syllabus for the Framework.

In all cases the needs of the students were seen to be compromised:

At certain times of the year (especially the end) I have more kids wanting to see me than I have time to see..... the time I have allocated for careers work is not timetabled.....a lot of time is lost.....the job of seeing students sometimes doesn't seem to be worth doing with the time available.....the maximum I could see in the few hours I have each week would be 3 or 4..... this is very frustrating [6th Form Dean].

It's the ones I don't see that worry me. The 'good' kids. There's this belief they know where they're going and they don't bother you, they tend to get an idea in their heads and stick to it.....these students are often the ones needing careers advice to help them expand their options and to be more lateral, these are the ones who have their hearts set on a particular direction which for some doesn't work out and this can be devastating for them.....There is just no time to see these students, they just get left alone [Careers Adviser].

We are not getting to kids that are dropping out or staying at home. Kids with no ideas about their futures are slipping through the net.....this needs to be done at school, rather than leaving it to the community [Management Staff Member].

One staff member was particularly concerned about the career development needs of students in the fifth and sixth forms:

The fifth and sixth form students are the ones who miss out..... the seventh form students are covered, but even then the focus is rather narrow in terms of only helping them with options at polytech or university for next year, and things like going through their enrolment form and organising for them to go and talk with someone about student loans.....so even then the non-academic seventh formers miss out too.....for this school to provide an adequate service they need to have a good look at priorities.....all fifth and sixth and seventh formers need to be seen, not just those going on to university or into the transition class.....careers guidance needs to be done properly and it is not being done at all with fifth and sixth formers, they receive no guidance [6th Form Dean].

A similar theme was expressed by the careers adviser at this school:

The senior school has really expanded in the last ten or so years. There's so much diversity now so there's a wider base to have to respond to. At the moment I see the ones who knock at my door but really, I also need to be out there and seeking out those students who don't come to me.....at the moment I'm seeing quite a few sixth formers and some of their parents.....these students have no idea of what they want to do or where to go.....there's a real sense of alienation amongst a lot of students in the senior school.....somehow I have to get to the fifth formers and tidy this up.....really, I would like more time with departments to encourage teachers to help pick up some of the responsibility for helping the students with future options, making teachers more aware of where their subjects can take the students [Careers Adviser].

The concern expressed by staff in this study echoed earlier research in New Zealand which has argued the need for specialist full time career guidance personnel with primary responsibility for career guidance services (Careers Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995; Cole, 1996; Holmes, 1996; Miller, et al 1993). In particular, Miller et al (1993) pointed out that developments in guidance and counselling in secondary schools has not kept up with the increased number and diversity of needs at the senior level. The implication was that guidance time has been spread too thinly across a range of guidance staff, and in turn raising serious concern about the effectiveness of guidance services

generally. Recent criticism by the Careers Information and Guidance Review Panel (RCIGRP, 1995) concerning the variability in provision of career services in New Zealand secondary schools relates directly to this issue.

A second aspect of resourcing related to matters to do with training and development. These emerged as paramount in discussions with staff involved most directly with careers assistance, mainly the careers advisers, transition teachers and guidance counsellors. The careers advisers at both schools and the transition coordinator and transition teacher at one of the schools had all attended the Careers Advisers' Induction training (2 - 3 days) from the Careers Service at least once since being employed in their current positions, and one of the group had recently attended a two-day course for career guidance personnel offered by a private consultant in a nearby city. The guidance counsellors in one school reported that they attempted to attend as many courses as they could, although neither could recall the last time they attended a careers-related course. The guidance counsellor working in the other school reported he was not able to take advantage of any career-related training as "there was very little time for extras in the job". On-going training generally included attendance at Careers Service update days. Most of the staff interviewed were aware of the need to organise School-Industry Links meetings with careers staff in other schools in the community, mainly as a means to facilitate coordination of the programme with industry in the city. A senior staff member reported having been in touch with the careers advisers and management at these schools with a view to arranging such a meeting.

Much of the discussion, however, related to the increased responsibilities of staff working in this area, many as a direct result of recent structural changes in secondary education. These included the introduction of multi-level study, increased student retention in the senior school, School-Industry Links coordination, writing units standards on career pathways for the Framework, among other changes. For many staff in this area, a major training need was a comprehensive course relating to updates on Framework issues and career pathways planning linked to the new ITO and NZQA courses and qualifications. For many also, recent changes in the roles and responsibilities in school-based careers work in schools needed to be professionally recognised and supported. The need for training in listening and counselling skills and skills for motivating students were common themes, as well as time management and training in managing information.

In general, however, staff comments mirrored the call of the recent career industry review (RCIGRP, 1995) for appropriate training and development of practitioners in this field. Of additional note was the continued (and often frustrated) reference to the inadequacy of a grassroots 'commonsense' approaches which have been the character of careers assistance in the country's secondary schools since national provision in the late 1940s (see Chapter Four):

The careers advising role has changed considerably and is almost getting to be guidance counselling..... counselling skills would be useful [Careers Adviser].

At the moment careers assistance in this school is half-baked. I don't mean that the intention isn't there, because it is and everyone involved with this area from management to the subject teacher has the very best intention where students are concerned; its that there is a need for this area in the school to be professionally staffed..... trained careers teachers, and available full time [Management Staff Member].

A lot of my work with kids is counselling, although I've had no training in this area, and I'm very aware that I'm not trained..... At the moment I'm looking into training options for myself but there just isn't any programme or package that I could link into..... [HOD, Transition Education].

The kids who are seeking help are those who need direction and motivation. Some of these kids have real problems and I just don't have the skills to give them the help they need..... Sometimes I'm really in the deep end..... most of the time they're [the careers adviser and guidance counsellors] just too busy so they [the students] come to see me. I can't turn them away because they don't see there's anyone else in the school to go to, and as I said, most of the time there isn't anyway..... so I'm in a real bind. I'm put in a position where these kids need my help and I just don't have the knowledge or the skills to help them, so I just sit there and listen and be a good friend.....[Transition teacher].

I've not had any careers emphasis in my training so I don't really have a framework or a model for working on careers issues with the students..... my time is mostly tied up with kids in immediate personal crisis and their families..... they're the ones I really only have time to work with. The careers adviser really deals with most of the cases which are careers related anyway, although there are times where we [the careers adviser and the guidance counsellor] have needed to work together with some kids [Guidance Counsellor].

In terms of resources other than time and professional development and training, most staff thought that they were adequately resourced in the careers area. Both schools had access to transition ancillary hours and were most appreciative of this assistance, especially

in terms of the help with careers information provisions, Open Polytechnic coordination and the organisation of School-Industry Links. The school with the Transition Education Department comprising all of the guidance staff and resources seemed to benefit considerably from this resource; open access to staff and information by students was seen to be particularly valuable. The Careers Office in one school and Careers Resource room in the other, housed the Career Quest database as a basic resource, although particular note was made by staff who worked with this that self-help resources such as written careers information and the database were insufficient on their own and needed to be seen as one of the tools that students might use in career exploration. In one school the careers adviser made special mention that the database, although a valuable tool, really only met the needs of those who already had “a good idea of what they wanted to do”. In these cases, “the small minority of the senior students”, the database was most useful as “a guide along the various pathways to their chosen occupational goal”.

The experiences and concerns expressed by staff generally were consistent with research in the area which has established the vital although limited role of good careers information resources in the young person’s quest for direction (Blustein, 1992; Blustein & Phillips, 1994; Blustein, et al 1991; Young, et al 1991; Young, et al 1997). Blustein’s (1992) review of the literature in this area, for example, indicated that it is not sufficient to assume that individuals reviewing information would necessarily engage in accurate information processing. Young people in particular are vulnerable to information bias, which may in turn perpetuate existing social inequities in career behaviour (cf., Blustein, 1992). Thus, it would seem important for those providing careers assistance to young people in schools to be appropriately trained in modeling effective exploratory attitudes and behaviours and in providing the learning that students require to avoid premature closure on career options and to be objective in processing information. In light of the high number of students responding to career-related concerns in a non-productive manner (see Section 8.3.1), this caution seems particularly timely.

8.4.2 Students’ Perceptions of Careers Assistance

Students were asked to report on the nature and focus of careers guidance received at the school. It is important here to stress that the data in this section refer to student perceptions, irrespective of what the school’s intentions were about the nature and focus of

careers assistance. In keeping with the ecological heritage of developmental contextualism, it is maintained in this research that student perceptions of what career guidance was and whether they believed they were exposed to it is at least as important as the nature of the actual career assistance provided.

Different types of careers guidance, detailed from the range of personal staff interviews, review of school documentation, observation, and student focus group sessions, were identified and students were free to highlight one or more of these as they related to three key career guidance areas: (i) choosing school subjects, (ii) considering jobs or job training, and (iii) considering options in further education.

A further question referred to the perceived focus of career assistance received by students and they were asked to specify the types of guidance found to be most helpful in making decisions around the key career development areas. A summary of responses by form level is provided in Appendix 2, Tables A2.6 - A2.8 (sources of career guidance received) and Tables A2.9 - A2.11 (perceived usefulness of sources).

The composite of Tables A2.6 - A2.8 in Appendix 2 revealed students were exposed to a variety of careers assistance, from careers information and careers advice to careers education experiences and access to careers counselling. Overall, three general areas of careers assistance were identified for further analysis: people-oriented sources, information-based sources, and sources related to 'hands-on' experience. By far the most common source consulted by students was people-oriented. Students were most likely to consult with parents, careers advisers, teachers and the school guidance counsellor in all matters to do with careers, although parents were most likely to have been involved in discussions around school subject, and careers advisers around making decisions concerning options in further education. Written information was reported as a second, although considerably lesser consulted source, with it being the most popular information-based source referred to in planning future job or training pathways. Hands-on experience was the least available source indicated by students. Where this was indicated it was most likely to have included job shadowing or visits to tertiary institutions and mainly in relation to considering jobs or industry training options.

The following series of figures represent the perceived 'usefulness' of each source within the category. In the first of these, Figure 8.5, by far the most helpful people-oriented sources nominated by students were the school counsellor and careers adviser, although

these sources were considered most helpful in assisting with decisions around options beyond school. Parents and careers advisers were reported by students to be the most helpful people for choosing school subjects, with other teachers in the school coming close behind these two. It seemed that parents and subject teachers provided an important source for immediate career decisions, such as those that concerned which school subjects to take, whilst the career 'specialists' in the school were viewed as important sources of help in planning for future career pathways.

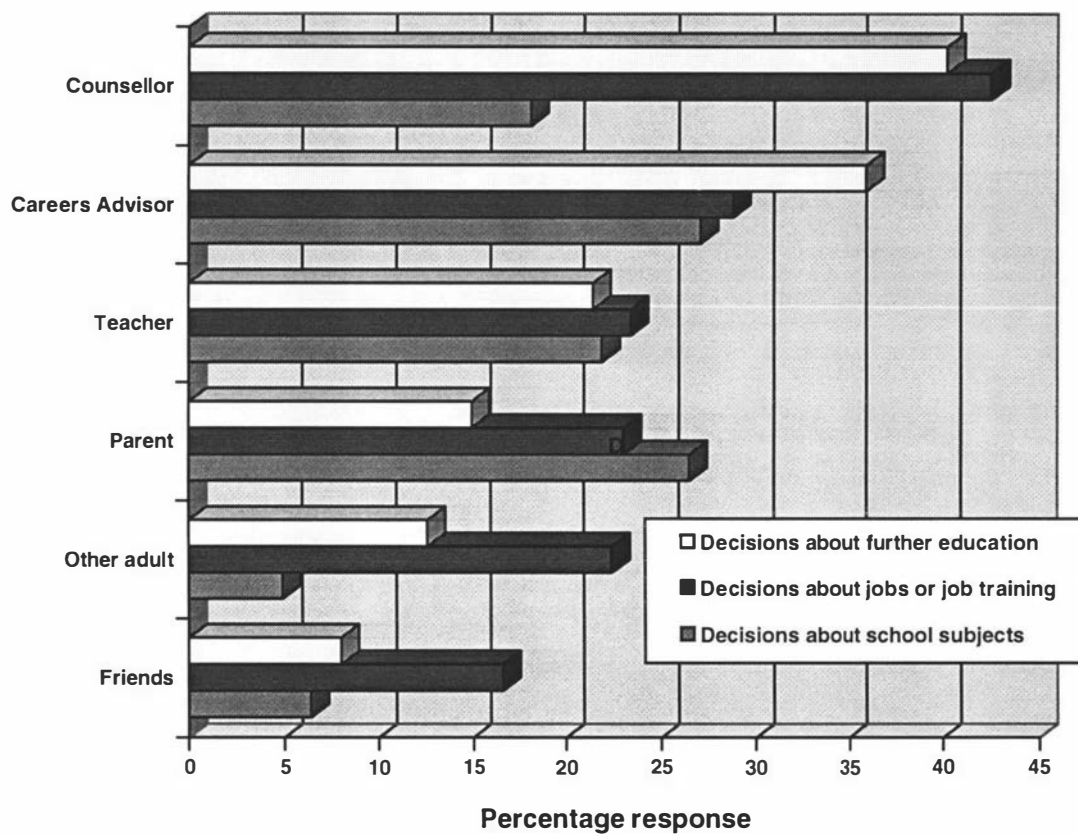


Figure 8.5

Most helpful people-oriented source in making decisions around school subject options and post-school education, training and work options.

Figure 8.6, which illustrates the results relating to information-based sources of careers assistance, shows that the combination of discussions in class lessons and written sources were most helpful in making decisions concerning further education, whilst those who attended seminar presentations conducted by representatives of various occupations reported this source most valuable in decisions around job and training opportunities.

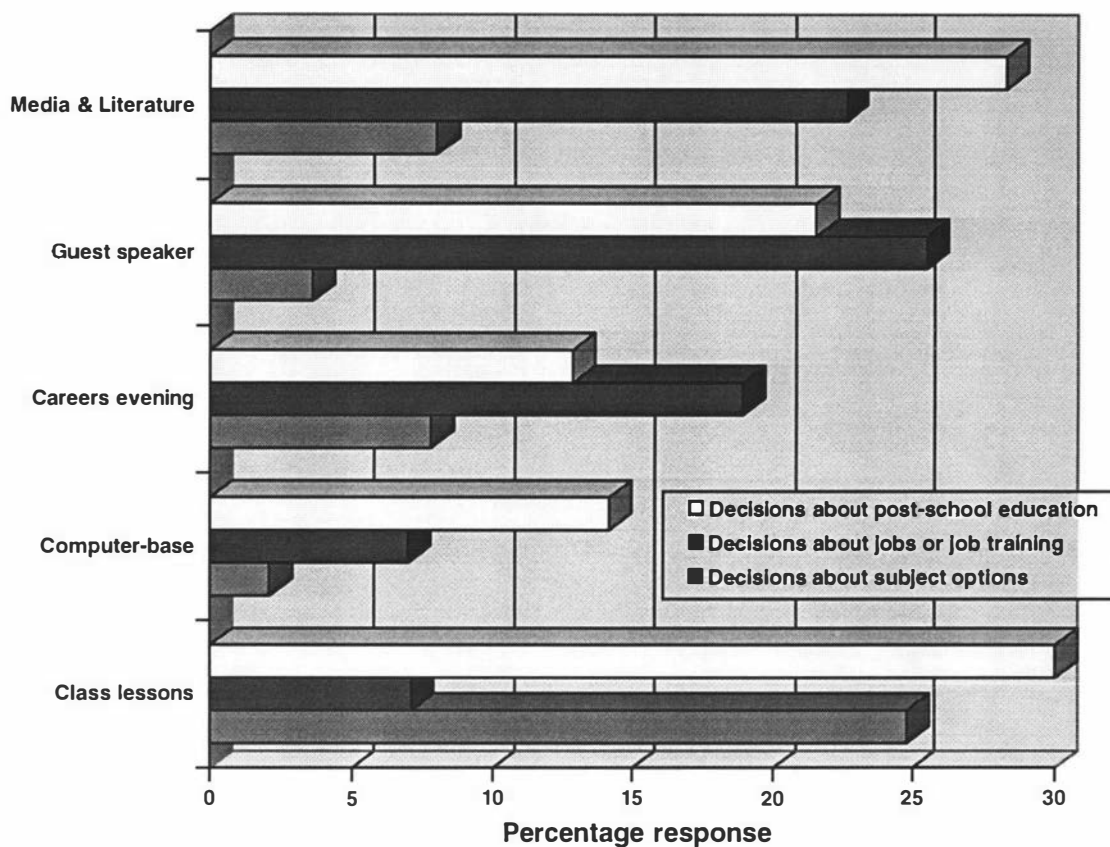


Figure 8.6

Most helpful information-based source in making key decisions around school subject options and post-school education, training and work options.

The most helpful ‘hands on’ source for students (Figure 8.7) was on-site visits, which included job shadowing and visits to tertiary institutions. This is most interesting in light of the data presented in Tables A2.6-A2.8 which showed few opportunities for on-site visits relative to other experiential sources of careers guidance. Thus, although the opportunity for on-site visits was rare, the experience was considered most valuable in making career-related decisions. As shown in Figure 8.7, these opportunities were considered the most useful in both choosing school subjects and planning for courses in post-school education. It is noteworthy also that the ‘newer’ options of Link and STAR (Education Gazette, 1992; Pathways, 1992), and those for which much of the recent government funding for careers assistance in schools had been targeted (see Section 4.4.1), were seen to be considerably less helpful sources. This was with the exception of

assistance in making decisions about jobs or vocational training pathways. In this instance, being enrolled in tertiary education courses whilst still at school was considered the most helpful ‘hands-on’ source of careers assistance.

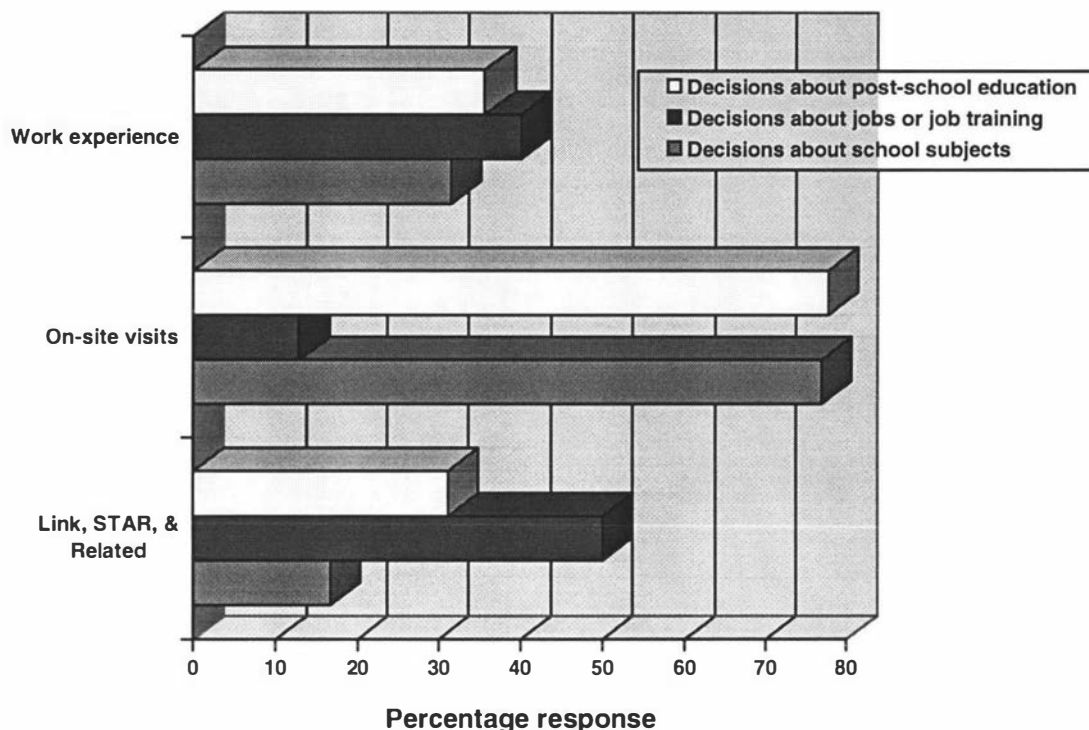


Figure 8.7
Most helpful ‘hands-on’ source in making key decisions around school subject options and post-school education, training and work options

8.4.3 Students' Evaluation of the School Careers Service

The final component to this section was designed to ascertain students' perceptions on the usefulness of the school's overall career guidance programme in course planning and facilitating readiness for career journeys beyond school. Students were asked to indicate their views on the overall career guidance they had received by reporting whether or not it could be improved. An open question followed from this and encouraged those who answered positively to state ways in which they felt that such career guidance could be improved. Figure 8.8 shows the extent to which participating students felt improvements needed to be made and Figure 8.9 sets out the results obtained from the open question relating to how it could be improved. The breakdown of data by form level to accompany Figures 8.8 and 8.9 is provided in Table A2.12 and A2.13, respectively, in Appendix 2.

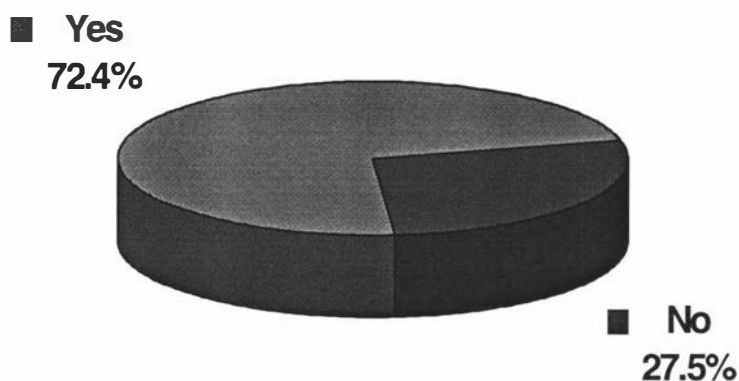


Figure 8.8
Students' indication of needed improvements
in the school career assistance they experienced

Figure 8.8 illustrates quite clearly the majority of students in this survey thought that improvements needed to be made to the nature of career guidance in the school. Table A.12 (refer Appendix 2) provides a detailed breakdown of the responses and shows that although the need for improvement was stated by the majority, students in the sixth form were considerably more enthusiastic about the suggestion (83.2%) than those in the seventh (71.7%) and fifth forms (61.1%). Taken together, the results mirrored responses by staff working in this area who acknowledged a problem with the quality of careers assistance provided to students in the senior school, particularly to those referred to as 'non academic'. This, according to some staff represented the vast majority of the student base in the senior school (refer Section 8.3.1). The responses of sixth form students in particular, and to a lesser extent, the students in the fifth form, reinforced the need for attention to the difficulty that young people at these levels seem to have in dealing constructively with career-related problems (see Section 8.3.1).

The data thus far provide a very interesting pattern. Students were exposed to a wide range of guidance on careers matters (see Tables A2.6 - A2.8 in Appendix 2) and, generally, valued the experience (refer Figures 8.5 - 8.7). Nevertheless, the sources consulted did not seem to be meeting students' career development needs as well as perhaps they might. This latter point was certainly suggested by the pattern of responses

illustrated in Figure 8.9, and the information expressed in Figure 8.10 elaborates this observation further.

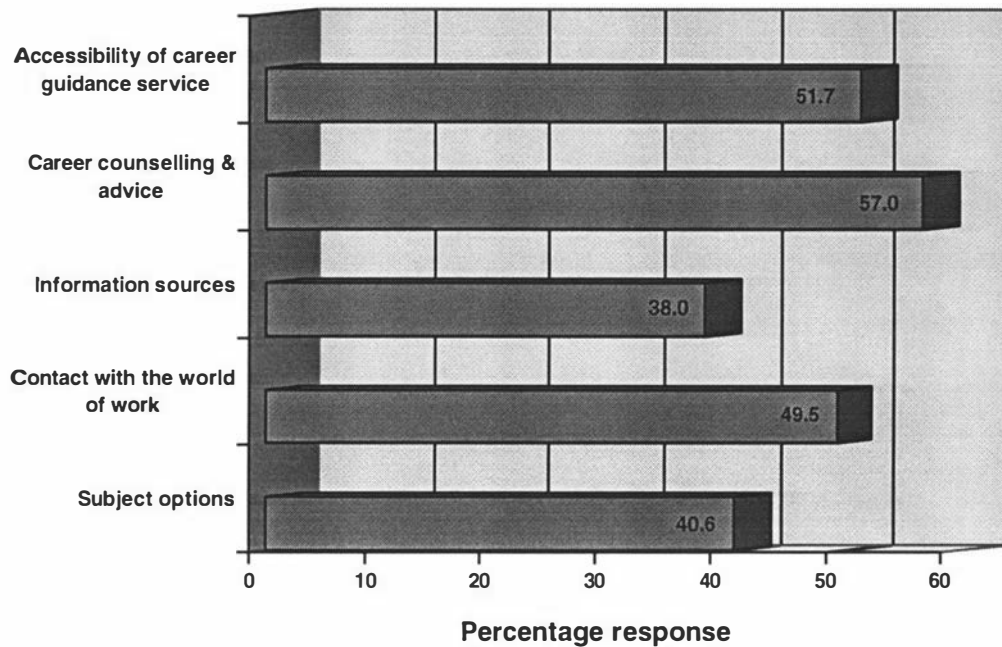


Figure 8.9
Areas of improvement suggested by students

Figure 8.9, detailing areas where students considered improvements could be made, revealed five key factors relating to: accessibility (51.7%), career counselling and advice (57.0%), information (38.0%), contact with the work place (49.5%), and subject options (40.6%). These categories were derived from information in Table A2.13, Appendix 2.

By far the most frequently mentioned area for improvement by students related to the accessibility of career advice and counselling provided in the school. This finding is noteworthy, for, as previously pointed out (refer discussion around Figure 8.5), the school counsellor and the careers adviser were selected by students as the most helpful people-oriented sources in relation to career-related concerns. Nevertheless, issues relating to the quality of this assistance were mentioned by over just over half (57.0%) of those responding to this question. Of this group, the majority of students (70.1%) made comments to the effect that personal meetings with the school counsellor and/or careers adviser should be compulsory, with considerably more reference to this being made by those in the sixth form (83.9%) and the seventh form (73.8%), than made by those in the

fifth form (49.3%). Just under two-thirds (62.2%) of responding students wanted greater access to a careers adviser or counsellor in relation to personal career-related issues, whilst around half (51.1%) thought that those responsible for assisting with career problems were not sufficiently experienced or qualified. Many of the comments expressed by students mirrored the criticisms raised by staff (see Section 8.4.1) concerning the need for professionalism, availability and an appropriate status for the service in the school. The following excerpts reflected this feeling:

They just think you know what you want and if you don't know they tell you what they think is best for you, even if you don't agree.

They should listen to you instead of just telling you what to do.

It's a joke, they don't know what they're doing.

Someone should be available to talk to. Not to tell us what to do.

The careers guidance people are really nice people, but they don't know what to do if you have a real problem.

It's hard to get hold of him and arrange a time that suits both of us without missing classes.

Sometimes it is very hard to get an appointment with the careers adviser and so perhaps the employment of some extra help or more flexible hours is needed.

Get them to contact you instead of you having to hunt them down. Having them available to you at any time of the day.

Tell the teachers that sometimes there are more important things in our lives, like knowing what we are going to do for the rest of our lives.

A further area nominated for improvement related to using information. About half (53.7%) of the students thought that more information about career options and pathways to those options should be available. This was reflected in such comments as:

Show us where subjects are leading us.

We need to know more about the career possibilities and courses we need.

They should help you to choose subjects which will help you in the future.....

We should have individual sessions to help us sort out what is involved and what we really want to do and how to get on the right track.

Help us get a goal.

More help! Greater scope, more insight into different and alternative course options, tending away from traditional university and polytech routes.....

In addition to accessibility to, and the quality of, the careers advice, career counselling and career information resources, around half (49.5%) of the students thought that the schools careers service generally was not as widely available as it could be:

Make it known that there is a career guidance service in the school, what they can do for you, and where they can be found.

It should be for everybody.

Make it part of our school timetable. It should be a subject like science or computer studies.

There needs to be more variety, more people, and more time given so that everyone in the school can access it.

A similar number of students (49.3%) recommended careers assistance should be aimed more at the individual in the senior school, with considerably more support for this from those in the sixth form (77.0%) in contrast to those in the fifth and seventh forms (21.2% and 26.1%, respectively). A final trend in the suggestions for improvement was reflected in comments expressing a desire for more 'field' experience, such as work exploration and job shadowing. In many cases students anticipated benefits akin to the motivational, social-educational, and vocational advantages described by Watts (1983). Comments such as the following were expressed by just under half (48.8%) of the sample, representing a similar number across all form levels:

Get us out of the classroom and see what the real world is like. Help us to see what we might want to do when we leave school.

We should be encouraged to see what the jobs linked to school subjects are like so we can decide if that is the right option for us.

Job experience should be for everyone.....so we can see what's out there that we like and that we might be good at.

Job shadowing is great but we should have it earlier and more often, it should be part of school subjects so we can have wider options, not just a one-off because you're leaving school.

Clearly, access to personal and 'specialised' careers assistance was considered a most highly valued source for the majority of students in this survey, as was the quality of information, including how best to use information in career planning and decision-making. Generally, students considered the school careers service to be a valuable and worthwhile part of their secondary school experience, and, as many indicated, a service that linked school experience to experiences outside of and beyond school.

On balance, it is reasonable to observe that there was no limit to the range of careers assistance required by secondary school students, which was consistent with the exploratory emphasis in career development during this phase of the life span (Blustein, 1992; Cherry & Gear, 1987b; Jordaan, 1963; Super, 1980, 1981, 1983). The variability of needs across the senior school curriculum and within each level attested to a developmentally responsive service, driven by an appropriately resourced, adequately trained and professionally supportive team. The results of the empirical investigation reported here reaffirmed the rationale for the investigation itself and supported recent calls (e.g. Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995; New Zealand Association of Counsellors, 1996; Careers Service, 1997) for professionally informed national guidelines which would provide standards for developmentally appropriate and accountable careers assistance in the country's secondary schools. The nature and direction of provision and the developmental contextual considerations which might inform this process are the focus of the next section, which is the epilogue to this thesis.



PART 4

Epilogue

Summary and Conclusions

Within a framework of dynamic interactionism the study herein set out with three objectives in mind. The first objective was to provide a synthesis of the literature relating to the developmental contextual position of young people in New Zealand. The second was to explore the role of career development in the life space of senior secondary school students alongside the potential of school-based careers assistance. The third objective was to provide informed comment and direction for consideration in the development of policy and practice guidelines for careers services in secondary schools. The first and second objectives guided the analysis presented in the preceding chapters. It is to this third and final objective that the discussion now turns. In this final section of the thesis the essence of the analyses which formed Part's One to Three are captured in a summary discussion of policy, practice and research implications of a developmental contextual position in school-based careers services.

The premise upon which this study has evolved is characterised by an insistence on an holistic understanding of young people's career development needs within both proximal (e.g., developmental, family) and distal (e.g., historical, economic, educational) contexts. This developmental contextual perspective offers a conceptual tool for understanding and acting upon the response of schools to their students' career development needs but also, to the contribution of young people to their own career development and awareness. It stresses the importance of the interaction between young people and their changing environments and asserts that the main effects on development stem from that interaction. In so doing, it does not hold students, schools or wider social forces entirely responsible for outcomes. Instead, it approaches strengths and needs of students, schools and society as a reciprocal process and is concerned with identifying the nature of interactions amongst these elements. Ultimately, this position advocates the responsibility of policy-makers and careers practitioners alike to identify and build career development strengths of young people and to change aspects of the education system that hinder the potential for healthy career development. Both individuals and society have much to gain from young people's

capacities to make meaningful and informed decisions concerning school and post-school pathways.

One essential ingredient in understanding the process of career development in New Zealand is understanding such macrosystem factors as the country's political economy. New Zealand has been and remains a country in transition. Major changes are taking place in the underlying structure of the nation's economy and in the relationship of this economy to the world economy. As a result, the nature of individual career trajectories is now far more complex and diverse, and the options for human resource development are wider and multifaceted. Concurrently, the pattern of interests represented in the formation of policy has changed from social democratic Keynesianism to New Right monetarism, from an emphasis on social dependability to personal responsibility. These developments have, in turn, stimulated the evolution and diversification of New Zealand's education and training systems. As a result, career services in secondary schools are positioned at a crucial interface of personal and societal needs and should assume an important role in helping young people develop the resources to manage personal career transitions.

Careers assistance has been a feature of the secondary school system for some decades. During this time, the philosophy has changed from remedial skills for 'the deficient' to generic skills for all, although practice has not always followed suit. Similarly, the definition of 'skills', since the late 1980s, has moved from specific vocational skills to a repertoire of personal development competencies, sufficiently broad that arguably it could be said to define what all education should be about. Within the past few years the focus has moved back to 'the world of work', with an emphasis now on 'readiness' rather than preparation. Also, pathways through further education and training, rather than employment, have become the target for high school leavers. Superseding the vocational accent is an emphasis on 'career' and, some might say, 'life' planning. Important for many is the challenge to break away from earlier perceptions of careers assistance as creating holding places for 'reluctant returners', to the present notion of it facilitating opportunities for all students to begin to take control of their own career development.

At the heart of this challenge is developmental appropriateness. Development during adolescence is primarily a journey in search of connectedness to self and to other,

and of meaning in relation to past, present and future. Development in the career realm is a central part of this process. The degree to which young people are in a position to confront the challenge of realism and purpose in career direction, in turn, reflects the quality of personal development that emerges from the experience. Moreover, the experience of meeting the challenge is developmentally cumulative. The better people are able to address career exploration during adolescence, the better they will be able to negotiate similar challenges in future career journeys during adult years.

There are many settings within adolescents life spaces that may influence and be influenced by young people's career development awareness and needs. One of these is the school system. Alongside experiences within the family, this constitutes a powerful setting in which the quality of young people's quest for meaning and connectedness in relation to career direction may be influenced. Developmentally appropriate careers assistance in schools, the nature of which is determined in part by school philosophy, and the quality of which is reflective of a school's guidance network generally, is recognised both politically and in practice as an integral and fitting responsibility of secondary education.

Several forces are at work to support the need for a professionally informed, adequately resourced and comprehensive career development programme in schools. The results of the empirical investigation undertaken here imply at least two of these. First, the parents and guardians of students favoured career development as an integral focus of secondary education. Whilst the finding is limited in its generalisability, the parents in this study generally conveyed a perception of the diversity and complexity of options for young people both within school and beyond, and were in agreement that schools had a responsibility to their students to encourage informed awareness of options along the various education, training and employment pathways. The schools were considered to have well-developed careers information bases and parents were supportive of a need for the careers service to develop the provision of 'people' resources to assist their children in taking advantage of this information base. At the same time, there was strong affirmation of the need to involve parents in this process, a value consistent with recent legislation, for example, such as that which has seen the establishment of elected Boards of Trustees, who are members of the community responsible for a school's charter (refer Section 3.5.2). The concern was expressed by parents in this study that they did not

know enough about what the school provided and this was seen to make it difficult for parents to be involved constructively with their children's career development needs. Thus, supportive policy guidelines are required to encourage optimal partnerships between schools and parents in this aspect of students' development.

The family is an important context for young people's emerging quest for meaning and connectedness and, as the discussion in Section 5.4.7 showed, parents play a notable role in this process. Indeed, as Trusty and Watts (1997) pointed out, parents may have the greatest potential for assisting their children in career planning. This potential was certainly suggested by results of the empirical investigation, which showed parents were a highly valued source for consultation in career-related matters by young people. This was particularly the case in assisting with decisions around curricula options. Next to careers advisers, the students nominated parents the most helpful source for choosing school subjects. Career development practitioners in schools need to be aware of this resource in their work with students. The positive perceptions of students in relation to their parents in the current study suggests school career practitioners are presented with an opportunity and should capitalise on the mesosystem potential between home and school and integrate parents' and children's career development efforts successfully. It is, therefore, in the best interests of all concerned that parents are well-informed about the nature and availability of careers assistance in schools, and are confident in working with the school to provide the best possible environment to optimise their children's career development journeys.

This leads to a second powerful force in support of comprehensive careers programmes in schools: the students themselves. Whatever influence predominated for any one person, issues around career choice crystallisation and specification were salient in the lives of the high school seniors in this survey, with some issues exerting a considerable measure of stress. Access to good quality careers advice and counselling was nominated the most important area for improvement in the schools' careers service by an overwhelming majority of students. The implication, as indicated by the discussion in Section 5.4, was that experiences during the secondary school years were particularly critical in facilitating young people's capacity to approach and experience the transition to post-school life constructively and positively. One of the philosophical underpinnings in the career development literature, which is consistent with the developmental-contextual position in this thesis, is the recognition that career development is an integral part of

young people's overall development. Effective coping in the career realm is, therefore, reflective of effective coping in the realm of personal development generally. This, too, was supported by the results of the empirical study which found a strong relationship between career maturity and coping amongst the students, and tracked the development of the latter across the three senior years of secondary schooling.

A further force, beyond the empirical study, and identifiable in the exosystem, is the increasing national profile of the careers industry in New Zealand. This is manifest in the political arena through a series of Ministerial press releases announcing the statutory right of all secondary school students to developmentally appropriate careers assistance (Minister of Education, 1995a, 1995b, 1996b), along with the additional National Administration Guideline to schools which clarified and formalised the responsibility of schools to provide developmentally appropriate careers assistance for their students (Minister of Education, 1996a). The announcements have followed a series of reports and events that set the stage for a general movement to encourage the responsiveness of the secondary education system to the New Zealand economy, documented in Sections 3.4 and 3.5.

Since 1995, a formal network of careers practitioners has emerged throughout the country (initially, a series of Career focus groups, under the umbrella of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors), of which this writer was one of the initiating organisers. This has underlined a growing acknowledgment of the need for a professional body of practitioners and for a forum to lobby support for professional development and to provide direction in policy and resourcing of the careers industry. Commitment to the professionalisation of careers practitioners lay behind the Inaugural Career Counselling Conference held in November of 1995 (New Zealand Association of Counsellors, 1996). It was, likewise, a popular theme in many of the discussions held at this country's first International Careers Conference, sponsored by the New Zealand Careers Service, in January of 1997 (Careers Service, 1997). The Association of Career Practitioners, the national body for those working in all aspects of the country's careers industry was launched at this conference. There is to be a second New Zealand based International Conference for careers practitioners and affiliated parties, planned for January 1999. The roots of professionalism and political

profiling in the careers industry seem to have taken hold in New Zealand, which is reassuring.

At the same time, these arenas have shown that progress and innovation in career-related research are occurring, although perhaps not as nationally visible as might be desirable. As one sign of this development, there is an increasing proliferation of small-scale careers-oriented research studies largely undertaken through graduate programmes in recent years. In most cases, the work is of a high standard and carried out with scientific rigour. Unfortunately, much of this research is located in small pockets around the country, and filed away on completion in storerooms within the various university departments. In general, it only surfaces again when the next student comes in search of existing literature to build the case for another project. Even then, it is likely that this potential contributor to the scientific base of careers-related knowledge will only access relevant small-scale existing research by accident, or, if lucky, through personal networks. Whilst this informal networking is certainly an important source for careers research in New Zealand, it is time for such to become more visible.

This position links to the convincing argument, developed by Hesketh and Kennedy (1991) earlier this decade, that credible and well-documented evidence of the effectiveness of career services may off-set, or mitigate against, the vulnerability of an industry in constant change; an industry requiring increased responsiveness; and an industry in competition for resources and, therefore, needing to demonstrate accountability in practice. An emphasis on visible and credible evidence of effectiveness is particularly relevant to the development of a comprehensive careers service of the kind recommended by the review team for secondary schools (Career Information and Guidance Review Panel, 1995). The discussion in Chapter Four put forward the view that although a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate careers service has long been a goal in secondary education policy and practice, this emphasis has never really taken hold in reality. An important feature, missing from policy documents and school reports alike, has been well-documented credible evidence of the need for and effectiveness of such a service.

Another powerful force which has worked against the integration of a more comprehensive and professionally-informed school careers service in previous generations has been the educational focus of an academic elite. This has been embedded in the culture of New Zealand secondary schools and, as an exosystem feature, has been reflected in societal values on education generally. As discussed in Section 3.4 of this thesis, the country's secondary education system was initially designed to pave the way to university for a small number of students, through the mirroring of university academic disciplines. More recent developments, documented in Section 3.5, have, by comparison, indicated the opening up of the senior school to cater for a wider clientele, alongside increased links to multiple post-school pathways. In doing so, the reforms have removed a powerful historical barrier to the emergence of a more developmentally inclusive and integrated careers service.

The issue of professionalism presents a major challenge for careers practitioners in secondary schools. The discussion in Chapter Four, which documented the nature and evolution of careers assistance in the country's secondary schools, was clear in its message that, despite recognition of the importance of careers assistance, this service has remained on the periphery of guidance, largely playing the role of a considerably overdeveloped 'information broker' to students. The training of school personnel in career development and career counselling has been under criticism in most western industrialised countries, as Section 5.4.8 suggested. In that section, there was also criticism relating to the quality and availability of school staff responsible for providing careers assistance in New Zealand schools.

The results of the empirical study in this thesis suggested the issue of professional development and training for school careers staff remains a major area of concern. Neither school in the case study had the resources to do other than spread careers assistance thinly across the senior school, on a rationing system driven by pragmatism rather than professional judgement. The settings in the study were in agreement that career information resources in the school were adequate and this view was generally supported by the students, the majority of whom thought that information-based careers assistance in the school was sufficient. It was the concern of how best to integrate this information at both the personal-developmental and

practical-realistic levels which were considered most crucial areas needed for improvement. Staff were reasonably unified with regard to barriers toward quality school-based careers assistance. The lack of training pathways and general absence of a qualifications system to meet the range of skill needs required by school careers staff was nominated one such - albeit - frustrating barrier. Other barriers included unrealistic time allocation for the job and unclear role specifications concerning both the careers service and careers service staff within the school community. It is absolutely critical that practitioners and policy-makers alike recognise and accept that the recommendations of the national review (CIGRP, 1995) regarding career guidance, career education and career counselling in addition to career information, cannot be followed through without sufficiently trained, adequately resourced and professionally supported personnel in this area.

The review (CIGRP, 1995) introduced the concept of an integrated and coordinated 'careers service' as the interface between the needs of the young person and those of society. The challenge for careers services in schools is to move beyond the 'grassroots', reactive band-aid approach of earlier decades to an informed and systematic approach of the kind recommended for New Zealand by the national review team (RCIGRP, 1995). The fresh concept of an integrated and coordinated 'careers service' in the context of New Zealand secondary schools evolved from an approach first defined in the work of Byrne and Beavers (1991) in developing definitions for careers assistance in Australian schools. It was subsequently adopted by the New Zealand review team (CIGRP, 1995) to encourage consistency in ensuing policy, research and practice in New Zealand. The opportunity for standardisation of provision is important in an industry that has existed thus far with too much local autonomy and reliance on grassroots practice wisdom to capture credibility in the schooling system. The Review Panel definitions comprised all dimensions of careers assistance ranging across career information, career guidance or advice, career education and career counselling. Of importance to the current discussion is the intentional sequence of careers assistance (from information to counselling) which captures, first, the level of complexity in the nature of the assistance, and, second, the degree of specialist training required to provide the assistance. Thus, alongside standardisation of meaning is a beginning framework for defining training needs for

careers practitioners in schools, the particular qualities and likely implications of which are considered below.

Career information, which is generally presented in the form of booklets or pamphlets, is readily accessible, for example, through the school library, the local Careers Service, any learning or training institution, the Employment Service, and Income Support. It can be accessed by anyone, so long as they are aware of it. At the heart of the role is the basic management of a careers and training information system and the giving of advice to students based on this information. In the New Zealand secondary school environment this 'information broker' role may involve any staff member but has traditionally been seen to be the responsibility of the careers adviser (Department of Education, 1981).

As described in Chapter Four, reformation of the secondary school system in recent years has expanded the responsibilities of traditional positions in school careers work, and much so that some researchers (e.g. Cole, 1997; Holmes, 1996) have supported the call from recent reviews (e.g. Prime Ministerial Task Force on Employment, 1994b) to create specialist, full-time positions to meet the nature and scope of work now demanded. Indeed, the need was evidenced in discussions with transition and guidance staff members in the current study which showed that existing role requirements in school-based careers assistance extended well beyond traditional expectations to include multiple responsibilities, requiring more time and generally, greater scope and depth of interpersonal communication skills. The concern raised by school personnel mirrored those of the students, at least half of whom thought that those responsible for assisting with career problems in their school were not sufficiently experienced or qualified (refer Section 8.4.3).

Career advising (or, guidance) is about helping young people to interpret career-related information and to relate it to personal qualities and environmental resources. It, therefore, presumes the role of well developed 'informed networker', requiring more than simply giving out information or referring the young person to a particular organisation or location in the library. It is a role that requires specific knowledge of the nature of these sources and an ability to link the various components to individual student needs and resources. It also demands proficiency in a range and depth of interpersonal communication skills, the quality recognised by school personnel

in the current study who raised concerns about appropriate training for school-based careers work. The training concerns of school careers staff in the present study are well founded in relation to the existing literature. In his discussion of the theoretical and policy concepts underpinning careers work in British secondary schools, Law (1993) explained the “ghetto” principle as a way of illustrating the importance of trained personnel in the networking position:

The implication....is that narrow networks of community encounter, that is, “ghettos” (whether inner-city or leafy suburb), have the effect of narrowing and impoverishing career development. The converse is that contact beyond the “ghetto” mentality widens conceptions. That expectation is supported by the evidence; where authentic community contacts are deepened and expanded, career development is accelerated and diversified (p.306).

The career development implications for the young person exposed to a trained careers adviser and, accordingly, one who can respond appropriately and ethically, as opposed to one who bases his or her work purely on ‘common sense’ experience, is, therefore, akin to the difference between liberation and entrapment, or between empowerment and disempowerment in the career development journey.

At the heart of the educative experience is the means to make constructive use of such experiences as collecting career information and seeking careers advice (Law, 1993). Career education is about providing access to developmentally appropriate learning experiences to meet the career development needs of students (Byrne & Beavers, 1991). The ‘information broker’, ‘informed networker’ and ‘skilled communicator’ thus, are valuable aspects of this service, but they also require a well developed ‘teacher’, ‘assessor’, ‘coach’ and ‘integrator’ to make effective decisions about which aspects of career education to cover, in what order, and at which form levels in the curriculum. The capacity to provide quality career education experiences is related, in part, to the possession of an informed practice perspective on behalf of the careers staff (Conger, 1995; Law, 1993). Quality career education is also related to the potential of the school environment to integrate career education experiences as part of the young people’s overall educational experience (Bloor, 1992; Blustein, 1992; Byrne & Beavers, 1991). As already discussed, limited opportunities for professional development and training were considered notable barriers by staff in the

current empirical study, as was an apparent 'sidelining' of careers work in the school curriculum generally. This latter was evident also in the absence of any formal policy on careers assistance in the schools, although discussions with school staff and reviews of documentation indicated the acceptance that career development was an important and integral part of students general development.

Many of the school careers staff in the study alluded to the importance of counselling skills in their work. Likewise, students' appraisal of their schools careers service showed career guidance and counselling to be a highly valued source of help. At the same time, access to, and the quality of, this assistance was considered limited and the area most in need for improvement. Career counselling, which has as its general goal self-direction in career development, requires a well developed 'empowerer' role, informed by a counselling ethos and trained in the counselling approach. Fully trained counsellors in New Zealand secondary schools usually have at least two years of full-time equivalent post-graduate academic/professional work and a year or more of supervised practicum experience. Career counselling is a 'specialised' field of the counselling profession, identified by its focus on the learning and work oriented aspects of a person's life, but not subsumed by it. Indeed, it was the potential to offer specialist assistance at a personal level that was considered valuable by the students in this study who had received career counselling as part of their overall career development experience.

Clearly, if careers assistance in schools must meet students' needs for career guidance, career education and career counselling, as indeed suggested by the call for greater scope and quality of service by the students in this study (Section 8.4.3), then the professional development and training needs of those providing this assistance must reach beyond those of the conventional 'information broker'. If the nature and delivery of school-based careers services are to meet the variable needs of students at the senior level then it is imperative that a professionally informed system of qualifications to meet the range of skill needs for secondary school career services staff is established, adequately resourced and professionally supported.

The range and quality career assistance opportunities for young people is important. Just as all of humanity does not develop at the same rate physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally or spiritually, similarly in career development,

individual differences distinguish people of the same age and socioeconomic and educational status. This is prominent in the contemporary secondary school environment where emphasis is increasingly on keeping the doors to continuing study and vocational training open for longer and to a much more developmentally diverse range of young people. These young people, in justice to themselves, should be competent to make wise choices amidst the variety of options. The curricula emphasis on diversity and flexibility of choice conceives of the young person as moving through learning systems along a variety of pathways which have differing points of entrance to, and implications for adjustment in, the work system. This experience has been referred to in the developmental literature as 'the realm of risk' (Cagle, 1982), to describe resulting attitudes just as likely to be fatalistic as they are to seize opportunities, the key predictor being, the young person's 'readiness' (Bloor & Brook, 1993; Blustein et al, 1991; Ferguson & Miller, 1993; Mellor, 1994; Phillips & Blustein, 1994; Super, 1973). The essence of this process is captured in Bronfenbrenner's concept of the 'ecological transition' (refer Section 2.2.3) linking the quality of the young person's coping repertoire in the pre-transition environment to the quality of development that emerges from the transition experience.

In this thesis, the concept capturing the young person's 'readiness' to confront the career development challenges afforded by their life space has its origins in the work of Donald Super and his colleagues (see Section 5.4 in Chapter Five), who approached the process of career development during adolescence through the construct of career maturity. Career maturity, a multidimensional construct, is broadly defined as readiness to cope with the specific career development tasks of career choice crystallisation (narrowing down a direction) and specification (embarking on the journey). Mastery of the career development tasks required for crystallisation and specification during adolescence is thought to enlarge the repertoire of coping skills and dispositions for the journey and provides the basis for successful resolution of future career development challenges.

As the discussion in Section 5.4 of Chapter five showed, young people who are 'ready' for career choice crystallisation and specification are aware of the need to plan ahead for the future and accepting of responsibility for plans related to future career journeys. They have some understanding of personal abilities and interests,

work-related needs and values. They are likely to possess information about a variety of aspects of the world of work, in addition to information on preferred occupational areas, and, finally, are able to demonstrate competence in applying principles of decision-making to this knowledge. The discussion of results reported in Section 8.2.4 suggested the majority of secondary school students did not seem to be 'ready' to make informed decisions around key career development tasks, such as subject options and post-school education, training and work options. Keeping in mind the limitations of generalising the results reported in that section, it is noteworthy that, compared to their Australian counterparts, the students in this study perceived themselves as having very little involvement in educational and occupational planning; little 'useful' exploratory experiences around these areas; knew little about the nature and requirements of the world of work, and had greater difficulty making career-related (educational and occupational) decisions. Insofar as the career question is central to a young person's overall sense of identity, findings such as this imply the developmental needs of a large sector of senior secondary school students in this country are not being met. Given the relational links of career development to gains in both personal and societal realms, as documented by the results in the empirical study linking career maturity to coping strategies, this relative neglect raises concern about the current and future personal health and social stability of the majority of young people in this country.

The very notion of career maturity, which is at the heart of careers assistance in secondary schools, is a quality in need of professional attention in terms of both research and practice in this country. Valid and reliable assessments of young people's career development needs are rare in New Zealand. This may be due, in part, to the lack of trained and qualified career practitioners to assume responsibility for the task. It may also be a reflection of the paucity of research in the field. Whatever the reason, this needs rectifying if students', school and community needs are to be served well, and also, if careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools is to attain credibility internationally. It is timely, therefore, that locally validated assessment tools, capable of assessing the effectiveness of the range and quality of careers assistance as well as enabling decisions to be made about the appropriateness of certain aspects for individuals or groups of students, should become available. This thesis advocates an

adaptation of the CDI because of its link to an holistic philosophy in career development, its focus on the exploratory aspects of readiness targeting adolescent career development, and because of its long history as a internationally reputable tool for both research and practice. Nevertheless, many such assessment tools exist in the international literature. The challenge for career researchers and practitioners in New Zealand is to identify and validate the most appropriate tools for the particular situation about which data are required.

The careers service in the country's secondary schools is at a crossroads at a time when the range and quality of assistance is more desperately needed than at any other time in history. When arguing for a professionally informed and developmentally appropriate careers service in schools, it becomes clear that there are major policy challenges that comprise part of the ecological context in which careers assistance functions. One such example, which features in this thesis, is that current national statements and school charter policies supporting careers assistance remain something of an uncoordinated mosaic.

Chapter Four traced the repeated efforts to bring a comprehensive career development programme to schools, yet, as that chapter also showed, these efforts were in the absence, first, of any national guidelines as to how this objective was to be achieved in practice, and, second, of any trained and professionally supported personnel to implement it. Alongside the paucity of any systematic monitoring or evaluation of practice, even at a time of available and even generous financial resourcing (refer Section 4.3), the anomalies and disparities found between schools (Education Review Office, 1991; Ponter, 1990; CIGRP, 1995) are hardly surprising.

Needless to say, fragmentation and lack of coordination create a situation in which the substance and availability of careers assistance in schools continue to be especially vulnerable to social and political vagaries and to the likelihood that resources will continue to be diffused, diluted and potentially misdirected. Politically, New Zealand is open to the persuasion of elite groups, as the discussion in Section 3.3 showed. By corollary, discontinuity in policy from one political administration to another has meant that the country has continuously been starting over, where careers work in schools is concerned. Whilst this may have had the potential to encourage diverse developments, it more often than not has posed problems in observing the

impact of career initiatives over time, in assessing their effectiveness on the basis of objective data (rather than by political agenda), and, inevitably, in developing systematic approaches to national needs and goals. In the absence of any such informed 'baseline', governments of the day have made very little effort towards the development and regulation of a national policy for careers assistance in schools. Instead, they have attempted to affect school practice through the state funding of initiatives designed to address immediate concerns and through reports intended to serve as guidelines for associated initiatives (see Section's 4.3 and 4.4). Given the capacity for good careers services to balance personal equity with national efficiency (e.g., Watts, 1996), energy and commitment in the provision of national standards for careers assistance in schools is fitting.

This thesis sought to achieve two major goals. The first was to examine and provide a comprehensive base of informed literature to guide policy on careers services in secondary schools, which might also be a source for further research and discussion in this field. The second was to undertake an empirical investigation of a sample of secondary school seniors career development needs and awareness and to link this with the established literature. The intention was to provide a starting point for careers researchers, considering areas of particular focus for research toward developmentally appropriate careers assistance in New Zealand secondary schools.

The developmental contextual approach underpinning this thesis emphasises the need for robust, flexible but clearly defined careers assistance in secondary schools. In this way programmes may both respond to and influence the many salient features within adolescents' life spaces, ranging from those at the macrosystem level to those at the microsystem. The complex interaction of individuals and society in relation to career pathways demands services which are clearly defined in policy, operationalised in official documentation, adequately resourced in relation to personnel and training and properly integrated alongside existing school practices. Without this, career assistance will continue along its localised, uncertain path. Both the needs of young people and those of the political, social and economic context demand something better.

Appendices

A1

Student Survey Questionnaires

A1.1: Career Development Study (Part One) *About Myself*

Career Development Study PART 1: *About Myself*

This questionnaire is about YOU - It asks about YOUR attitudes toward school and how YOU feel about the subjects (or modules) you are taking this year. It asks about YOUR thoughts in relation to future work roles. Some questions also ask about ways YOU might deal with any problems or concerns.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please work through each question in turn. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one question. If you are not sure of an answer make the best guess you can.

SPECIAL NOTE: Your answers are confidential. Apart from you, the researcher is the only person who will read this questionnaire. Only you (and the researcher) will know what you have written.

- Name (or Codename)
- Gender (Please circle) Male Female
- Age Yrs Mths
- Form Level (Please circle) Form 5 Form 6 Form 7
- How do you describe yourself? (Please circle)
NZ Caucasian NZ Maori Pacific Islander Other (Please specify)
- Father's (or male guardian's) main occupation.
Please give title and, if possible, describe the type of work. Please indicate if unemployed, or unable to work (e.g. due to illness).
.....
.....
- Mother's (or female guardian's) main occupation.
Please give title and, if possible, describe the type of work. Please indicate if unemployed, or unable to work (e.g. due to illness).
.....
.....

8. List all subjects/modules (and Year level) you are taking this year. Please indicate if this subject/module is for a qualification. State which qualification, if no qualification write "none".

Subject/Module	Year level (Form 5)	Qualification School Cert
Science		
.....

9. How did you come to do these subject/modules? Circle the answer to show whether you agree or disagree with each reason for taking these subjects/modules.

I am taking these subjects/modules because:	Please circle	
I am interested in these subjects/modules	AGREE	DISAGREE
These subjects/modules provide me with an alternative to leaving school	AGREE	DISAGREE
I believe these subjects/modules will help me find employment when I leave school	AGREE	DISAGREE
I need these subjects/modules for entry into a training course I want to do when I leave school	AGREE	DISAGREE
I need these subjects/modules for a further education course I plan to do when I leave school	AGREE	DISAGREE
My parents/guardians wanted me to take these subjects/modules	AGREE	DISAGREE
I was advised by my teachers to take these subjects/modules	AGREE	DISAGREE
I was restricted in choice by the school timetable	AGREE	DISAGREE
Any other reason? (Please add as many reasons as you like)		

10. (The Adolescent Coping Scale- Specific Short Form (ACS) (refer: Australian Council for Educational Research, 1993).

11. Have you thought about the type of work you would like to do in the future?

YES Go to Q 11a NO Go to end of Questionnaire

- 11a. If YES, please state the type of work you'd like to do in the future.

.....

- 11b. Briefly, why would you like to do this type of work?

.....

- 11c. What might prevent you from doing this type of work? (If you think nothing will stop you, write "nothing").

.....

This is the end of the questionnaire.
Thank you for your help.

A1.2: Career Development Study (Part Two) My *Career Development* (Changes to the Career Development Inventory - Australia)

(1) OCCUPATIONAL GROUP PREFERENCE FORM

(i) Group J Technical: Outdoor

Delete: Fish & Wildlife Officer
Fruit Grower
Wheat Farmer

Add: Department of Conservation Office
Agricultural & Fisheries Officer
Horticulturalist
Sheep Farmer

(ii) Group S Business: Clerical

Delete: Clerk/Typist

Replace with: Clerk/Keyboard Operator

(2) QUESTION BOOKLET - PART A: CAREER PLANNING

(i) Question 4 (Page 1)

Delete: in college

Replace with: at a polytechnic, institute of technology, college of education

(3) QUESTION BOOKLET - PART B: CAREER EXPLORATION

(i) Question 23 (Page 6), Question 31 (Page 8)

Delete: Careers teachers

(ii) Question 28 (Page 7), Question 36 (Page 9)

Delete: college, or institute

Replace with: polytechnic, institute of technology, or college of education

(4) QUESTION BOOKLET - PART C: WORLD OF WORK INFORMATION

(i) Question 48 (Page 12)

Delete: CES
ACTU

Replace with: NZES
NZCTU

(ii) Question 49 (Page 12)

Delete: Business Week
The National times
Employment Prospects by Industry and Occupation

Replace with: National Business Review
Personal Investor
New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations

(iii) Question 53 (Page 13)

Delete: in technical institutes

Replace with: in polytechnics

Add: in institutes of technology

(iv) Question 54 (Page 13)

Delete: in technical schools
in continuing education centres
in technical institutes

Add: in Training Opportunity Programmes (TOPs)
in universities
in polytechnics
in institutes of technology

(5) QUESTION BOOKLET - PART D: CAREER DECISION-MAKING

(v) Question 62 (Page 15), Question 66 (Page 16)

Delete: college

Replace with: polytechnic

(ii) Question 69 (Page 17)

Delete: Careers teacher or adviser

Replace with: Careers adviser or school counsellor

A1.3: Career Development Study (Part Three)

My Career Guidance Experience

Career Development Study PART 3: *My Career Guidance Experience*

This questionnaire asks you about the career guidance help you have received at school. It is in four SECTIONS. Please work through each section in turn.

There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses will be treated as confidential, so give your honest opinion on each of the questions.

Do not discuss your answers with other people. It is your own opinions and your own experience that matters.

SECTION A

1. Name (or Codename)

SECTION B

2. What do you intend to do next year (for 1996)?

- Continue at school
- Attend a Polytechnic course
- College of Education
- Attend a course at University
- Attend an institute of technology course
- Look for full-time employment
- Don't know (GO TO SECTION C)
- Other, *please state*

3. Please state WHY you intend to follow this path next year.

.....

.....

.....

SECTION C

4. Please indicate the careers guidance you have received at school. State (A) the source of help AND (B) the focus of this help. Tick one or more boxes below.

(A) Careers Guidance received	(B) Focus of Careers Guidance			
	School subjects	Jobs or job training	Further education (university, college, etc.)	Other (please state)
Talking to school guidance counsellor				
Talking to school careers adviser				
Talking to other teachers				
Talking to parents				
Reading books or pamphlets				
Watching programmes or films				
Trying out one or two jobs (e.g. work experience)				
Looking around different work places or tertiary institutions				
Listening to talks from guest speakers				
Attending careers evenings (or similar, e.g. Careers Expo)				
Computer based career information				
Class lessons/discussions				
Other (please state)				

5. Of the careers guidance you have received (from Question 4), which ONE has been the MOST HELPFUL in making decisions about the following areas:

Focus of career guidance help received	The most helpful source of career guidance (circle ONE box and tick ONE box)
Choosing school subjects	
Considering the types of jobs or job training I might do	
Further education (e.g. polytechnic, university, college of education) courses available to me	
Other (Please state)	

SECTION D

6. Should the careers guidance help at your school be improved in any way at all? *Please circle.*
YES NO

7. If YES, please state below in what way(s) the career guidance help at your school might be improved:

.....

.....

.....

8. Please state any other comments you wish to make about the career guidance service at your school:

.....

.....

.....

.....

This is the end of the questionnaire.
Thank you for your help.



A2

Supplementary Results

Table A2.1
Basic statistical results on indices of
career development and coping styles

Scale	Score range	Mean	SD
<i>Career Development</i>			
Career planning	33 - 92	60.0	11.16
Career exploration	14 - 63	45.4	8.95
World of work knowledge	0 - 23	7.8	7.94
Career decision-making skills	0 - 12	2.6	3.31
<i>Coping strategies</i>			
Problem solving	33 - 90	61.5	10.04
Reference to others	20 - 85	47.2	14.39
Non-productive	26 - 80	51.3	10.37

Table A2.2
Occupational field of most preferred
work option at each Form level

Occupational field	Form Level			Total (N=553)
	Form 5 (n=201)	Form 6 (n=248)	Form 7 (n=104)	
Applied Science/Research	27 (13.4)	41 (16.5)	17 (16.5)	85 (15.3)
Education/Health/Welfare	31 (15.4)	48 (19.3)	24 (23.0)	103 (18.6)
Personal/Protective Services	35 (17.4)	54 (21.7)	21 (20.1)	110 (19.8)
Business/Sales	29 (14.4)	25 (10.0)	9 (8.6)	63 (11.3)
Technical Sciences	21 (10.4)	26 (10.4)	7 (6.7)	54 (9.7)
Agriculture/Horticulture	19 (9.4)	20 (8.0)	3 (2.8)	42 (7.5)
Trade/Manual	17 (8.9)	15 (6.0)	2 (1.9)	32 (6.1)
Entertainment/Creative Art	21 (10.4)	19 (7.6)	21 (20.1)	61 (11.0)

¹ Figures in brackets are based on total response from each Form Level

Table A2.3
Main concern expressed at each Form level

Main areas of concern	Form level			Total (N=654)
	Form 5 (n=261)	Form 6 (n=276)	Form 7 (n=117)	
Personal & family relationships	30 (11.4)	32 (11.5)	12 (10.2)	74 (11.3)
Money issues	26 (9.9)	34 (12.3)	20 (17.0)	80 (12.2)
Occupational direction	46 (17.6)	54 (19.5)	23 (19.6)	123 (18.8)
Academic competence	51 (19.5)	49 (17.7)	10 (8.5)	113 (17.2)
Unemployment/Future Job insecurity	71 (27.2)	67 (24.2)	21 (17.9)	159 (24.3)
Social & ethical issues	23 (8.8)	20 (7.2)	16 (13.6)	59 (9.0)
Personal development	14 (5.3)	20 (7.2)	12 (10.2)	46 (7.0)

Table A2.4
Average scores and degree of variability (in parenthesis) on indices of career development for each Form level

Form Level	Dimensions of career development			
	Planning orientation	Exploratory behaviour	World of work knowledge	Decision-making skills
Form 5	58.6 (11.7)	44.73 (9.1)	7.29 (7.8)	2.31 (1.9)
Form 6	60.3 (10.5)	46.13 (9.0)	8.00 (6.8)	2.72 (3.3)
Form 7	69.1 (6.8)	47.14 (6.8)	9.11 (8.9)	3.54 (4.0)
Australian sample (Year 11)¹	65.0 (11.9)	49.4 (14.4)	18.7 (3.6)	8.7 (2.4)

¹ Data representing the Australian sample is derived from Lokan (1984, p.20, Table 5.3)

Table A2.5
Average scores and degree of variability (in parenthesis)
on indices of coping across Form level

Form level	Coping styles		
	Problem solving	Reference to others	Non-productive
Form 5	60.0 (9.3)	47.6 (14.9)	53.6 (11.9)
Form 6	61.4 (11.1)	48.8 (14.8)	52.2 (10.8)
Form 7	63.0 (10.7)	55.3 (11.7)	50.3 (9.3)

Table A2.6
Type of careers assistance received by
students in choosing school subjects

Career Assistance received	Form level			Total (N=565)
	Form 5 (n=241)	Form 6 (n=207)	Form 7 (n=117)	
Guidance Counsellor	33 (16.1) ¹	91 (44.6)	61 (52.1)	185 (32.7)
Career Adviser	111 (30.4)	161 (44.1)	93 (25.4)	365 (64.6)
Teacher	76 (23.8)	142 (45.5)	101 (31.6)	319 (56.4)
Parent/Guardian	197 (41.2)	193 (40.3)	88 (18.4)	478 (84.6)
Literature	46 (18.4)	118 (47.3)	85 (34.1)	249 (44.0)
Other adult	79 (43.4)	61 (33.5)	47 (25.8)	182 (32.2)
Job experience	37 (50.6)	20 (27.3)	16 (21.9)	73 (12.9)
Site visits	9 (3.0)	31 (14.9)	22 (18.8)	62 (10.9)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	69 (84.1)	13 (15.8)	82 (14.5)
Careers evenings or similar function	104 (34.0)	136 (44.5)	65 (21.3)	305 (53.9)
Computer-based career information	24 (12.7)	90 (47.8)	74 (39.3)	188 (33.2)
Class lessons	61 (43.2)	47 (33.3)	33 (23.4)	141 (24.9)
Friend(s)	33 (35.5)	54 (58.0)	6 (6.4)	93 (16.4)
Polytech Link, STAR & related	0 (0.0)	19 (79.1)	5 (20.8)	24 (4.2)

- ¹ (a) Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of all students who reported having receive this type of assistance in choosing school subjects.
(b) As the form of career guidance received is a multiple response variable, a student may appear in more than one cell within a column.

Table A2.7
Type of careers assistance received by students
in considering jobs or job training

Career Assistance received	Form level			Total (N=508)
	Form 5 (n=144)	Form 6 (n=251)	Form 7 (n=113)	
Guidance				
Counsellor	19 (12.8) ¹	83 (56.0)	46 (31.00)	148 (29.1)
Career Advisor	53 (19.8)	117 (43.8)	97 (36.3)	267 (52.5)
Teacher	46 (41.4)	52 (46.8)	13 (11.7)	111 (21.8)
Parent(s)	91 (33.3)	103 (37.7)	79 (28.9)	273 (53.7)
Literature	69 (27.3)	97 (38.4)	86 (34.1)	252 (49.6)
Other adults	40 (28.9)	85 (61.5)	13 (9.4)	138 (27.1)
Job experience	9 (9.0)	87 (87.0)	4 (4.0)	100 (19.6)
Site visits	17 (11.4)	112 (75.6)	19 (12.8)	148 (29.1)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	77 (56.2)	60 (43.7)	137 (26.9)
Careers evenings or similar function	49 (42.2)	51 (43.9)	16 (13.7)	116 (22.8)
Computer-based career information	10 (10.1)	31 (31.3)	58 (58.5)	99 (19.4)
Class lessons	35 (62.5)	12 (21.4)	9 (16.0)	56 (11.0)
Friend(s)	52 (66.6)	19 (24.3)	7 (8.9)	78 (15.3)
Polytech Link, STAR & related	5 (35.7)	8 (57.1)	15 (13.2)	28 (5.5)

- ¹ (a) Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of all students who reported having received this type of assistance in considering job or job training options.
- (b) As the form of career guidance received is a multiple response variable, a student may appear in more than one cell within a column.

Table A2.8
Type of careers assistance received in considering post-school education
(including, Polytechnic, College of Education, & University courses)

Career Assistance received	Form level			Total (N=438)
	Form 5 (n=72) ¹	Form 6 (n=259)	Form 7 (n=107)	
Guidance Counsellor	29 (16.2) ¹	103 (57.5)	47 (26.2)	179 (40.8)
Career Advisor	43 (13.4)	181 (56.5)	96 (30.0)	320 (73.0)
Teacher	8 (6.6)	69 (57.0)	44 (36.3)	121 (27.6)
Parent(s)	21 (8.2)	164 (64.5)	69 (27.1)	254 (57.9)
Literature	34 (21.9)	70 (45.1)	51 (32.9)	155 (35.3)
Other adults	0 (0.0)	18 (75.0)	6 (25.0)	24 (5.4)
Job experience	7 (9.5)	45 (61.6)	19 (26.0)	73 (16.6)
Site visits	0 (0.0)	16 (59.2)	11 (40.7)	27 (6.1)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	31 (60.7)	20 (39.2)	51 (11.6)
Careers evenings or similar function	14 (25.9)	27 (50.0)	13 (24.0)	54 (12.3)
Computer-based career information	0 (0.0)	4 (57.1)	3 (42.8)	7 (1.5)
Class lessons	0 (0.0)	19 (95.0)	1 (5.0)	20 (4.5)
Friend(s)	12 (24.0)	33 (66.0)	5 (10.0)	50 (11.4)
Polytech Link, STAR & course	0 (0.0)	7 (43.7)	9 (56.2)	16 (3.6)

- ¹ (a) Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of all students who reported having received this type of assistance in considering post-school options.
- (b) As the form of career guidance received is a multiple response variable, a student may appear in more than one cell within a column.

Table A2.9
Most helpful source of careers assistance
when choosing school subjects

Source of Career Assistance	Form level			Total (N=565)
	Form 5 (n=241)	Form 6 (n=207)	Form 7 (n=117)	
Guidance Counsellor	17 (51.5) ¹	35 (32.9)	20 (12.5)	72 (38.9)
Career Advisor	26 (23.4)	41 (25.4)	33 (35.4)	99 (27.1)
Teacher	49 (64.4)	17 (11.9)	4 (3.9)	70 (21.9)
Parent(s)	61 (30.9)	47 (24.3)	19 (21.5)	127 (26.5)
Literature	10 (21.9)	6 (5.0)	4 (4.7)	20 (8.0)
Other adults	3 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	6 (12.7)	9 (4.9)
Job experience	4 (10.8)	8 (40.0)	11 (68.7)	23 (31.5)
Site visits	0 (0.0)	9 (81.8)	0 (0.0)	10 (76.9)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	2 (2.8)	1 (7.6)	3 (3.6)
Careers evenings or similar	11 (10.5)	7 (5.1)	6 (1.2)	24 (7.8)
Computer-based career info	3 (12.5)	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.1)
Class lessons	21 (34.4)	14 (29.7)	0 (0.0)	35 (24.8)
Friend(s)	6 (18.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (6.4)
Polytech Link, STAR & related	0 (0.0)	4 (21.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (16.6)
None	10 (4.1)	16 (7.7)	13 (11.1)	39 (6.9)

¹ Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of students at each form level who reported having received this form of assistance in choosing school subjects. The percentage is based on the data in Table A2.6.

Table A2.10
Most helpful source of careers assistance
when considering job or job training options

Source of Career Assistance	Form level			Total (N=508)
	Form 5 (n=144)	Form 6 (n=251)	Form 7 (n=113)	
Guidance Counsellor	14 (73.6) ¹	31 (37.3)	18 (39.1)	63 (42.5)
Career Advisor	29 (54.7)	33 (28.2)	15 (15.4)	77 (28.8)
Teacher	8 (17.3)	15 (28.8)	3 (23.0)	26 (23.4)
Parent(s)	21 (23.0)	30 (29.1)	12 (15.1)	63 (23.0)
Literature	22 (31.8)	28 (28.8)	7 (8.1)	57 (22.6)
Other adults	13 (32.5)	12 (14.1)	6 (46.1)	31 (22.4)
Job experience	5 (55.5)	31 (35.6)	4(100.0)	40 (40.0)
Site visits	6 (35.2)	4 (3.5)	9 (47.3)	19 (12.8)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	17 (22.0)	18 (30.0)	35 (25.5)
Careers evenings or similar	14 (28.5)	2 (3.9)	6 (37.5)	22 (18.9)
Computer-based career info	1 (10.0)	6 (19.3)	0 (0.0)	7 (7.0)
Class lessons	3 (8.5)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)	4 (7.1)
Friend(s)	4 (7.6)	9 (47.3)	0 (0.0)	13 (16.6)
Polytech Link & related	0 (0.0)	5 (62.5)	9 (60.0)	14 (50.0)
None	4 (2.7)	27 (10.7)	6 (5.3))	37 (7.2)

¹ Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of students at each form level who reported having received this form of assistance in considering job or job training options. The percentage is based on the data in Table A2.7.

Table A2.11
Most helpful source of careers assistance when considering post-school education
(including Polytechnic, College of Education, and University options)

Source of Career Assistance	Form level			Total (N=438)
	Form 5 (n=72)	Form 6 (n=259)	Form 7 (n=107)	
Guidance				
Counsellor	5 (17.2) ¹	39 (37.8)	18 (38.2)	72 (40.2)
Career Advisor	11 (25.5)	65 ()	39 (40.6)	115 (35.9)
Teacher	3 (37.5)	10 (14.4)	7 (15.9)	26 (21.4)
Parent(s)	2 (9.5)	21 (12.8)	15 (21.7)	38 (14.9)
Literature	8 (23.5)	23 (32.8)	3 (5.8)	44 (28.3)
Other adults	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	1 (16.6)	3 (12.5)
Job experience	5 (71.4)	17 (37.7)	4 (21.0)	26 (35.6)
Site visits	0 (0.0)	14 (87.5)	7 (63.6)	21 (77.7)
Guest speakers	0 (0.0)	8 (25.8)	3 (15.0)	11 (21.5)
Careers evenings or similar function	1 (7.1)	6 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	7 (12.9)
Computer-based career information	0 (0.0)	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (14.2)
Class lessons	0 (0.0)	6 (31.5)	0 (0.0)	6 (30.0)
Friend(s)	1 (8.3)	3 (9.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (8.0)
Polytech Link & related	0 (0.0)	5 (71.4)	0 (0.0)	5 (31.2)
None	26 (36.1)	43 (16.6)	10 (9.3)	55 (12.5)

¹ Figures in parenthesis represent the percentage of students at each form level who reported having received this form of assistance in considering post-school courses. The percentage is based on the data in Table A2.8.

Table A2.12
Indication of the need for improvement
in school career services

Form level	Improvement		Total
	Yes	No	
Form 5	146 (61.1) ¹	93 (38.9)	239 (38.6)
Form 6	218 (83.2)	44 (16.8)	262 (42.3)
Form 7	84 (71.7)	33 (28.2)	117 (18.9)
Total	448 (72.4) ²	170 (27.5)	618 (100.0)

¹ Column figures in brackets are percentages based on total sample within the respective Form group.

² Total row and column figures in brackets are percentages based on total sample response (N=618) to this question.

Table A2.13
Suggestions for improvement in school career services

Improvements	Form level			Total (N=448)
	Form 5 (n=146)	Form 6 (n=218)	Form 7 (n=84)	
Increase awareness of nature and location	91 (62.3) ¹	76 (34.8)	31 (36.9)	198 (44.1)
Increase availability	69 (47.2)	104 (47.7)	49 (58.3)	222 (49.5)
Greater access to counsellor/adviser	112 (76.7)	128 (58.7)	39 (46.4)	279 (62.2)
More experienced counsellor/adviser	54 (36.9)	99 (45.4)	76 (90.4)	229 (51.1)
Compulsory meeting with counsellor/adviser	72 (49.3)	183 (83.9)	62 (73.8)	317 (70.7)
Should be aimed more at the individual	31 (21.2)	168 (77.0)	22 (26.1)	221 (49.3)
More information about job requirements	19 (13.0)	111 (50.9)	51 (60.7)	181 (40.4)
Access to information about "not so popular" jobs/pathways	13 (8.9)	54 (24.7)	23 (27.3)	90 (20.0)
More information (generally) about career options & pathways	67 (45.8)	128 (58.7)	46 (54.7)	241 (53.7)
More work exploration/job shadowing experience	74 (50.6)	108 (49.5)	37 (44.0)	219 (48.8)
Provide wider range of subject options	53 (36.3)	91 (41.7)	38 (45.2)	182 (40.6)
Other	9 (6.1)	17 (7.7)	3 (3.5)	29 (6.4)

¹ Figures in brackets are percentages based on suggested areas of improvement within each Form level.

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ADDENDUM - RESEARCH NOTE **(November, 1998)**

Additional Information on the Method of the Discriminant Function Analysis calculated for the present Study

Scores on the dimensions of career development assessed by the CDI-A were used as discriminating variables in a direct discriminant function analysis to assess the relationship between career maturity and form level. As the intention of the analysis was to explore the relationship between career maturity and form level, the 'direct' method of discriminant analysis was considered the most suitable in relation to the hierarchical and stepwise options, in which case there is an *a priori* basis for selecting the order in which variables are used to develop the discrimination. The hierarchical method enables the researcher to select the order (on the basis of previous analyses or theoretical expectations for example), and in the stepwise approach the researcher pre-selects a specific statistical criteria to determine order of entry. By contrast, in the 'direct' approach used in this research, all discriminating variables were included at once in the analysis. That is, there was no *a priori* expectation as to which dimensions of career development were most likely to differentiate students within the various form levels.

For the three groups of students (representing form levels five to seven), two discriminant functions were calculated. The first of these was found to be statistically significant, indicating that the career development characteristics of the students in this survey differed according to form level. The results are reported on pages 162-166 of this thesis. The second function, which further separated the sixth formers from the fifth formers, was statistically insignificant with a chi-square value of 4.28 (3), $p=0.10$. Failure to reach statistical significance in discriminant analysis is taken as an indication that the function is not a reliable dimension of difference (Cliff, 1987). In their guidelines for interpretation of multivariate discriminant function analysis, Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) point out that insignificant functions "provide no additional information about group membership and are better ignored" (p.509), thus supporting the decision not to include discussion of the second function results in the empirical section of this thesis. The accompanying canonical correlation coefficient of .13,

indicating a negligible relationship between career maturity and the ‘further’ separation of sixth formers from the fifth formers, endorsed this exclusion also.

Post-hoc analysis of career maturity, coping and form level

A post-hoc three-group direct discriminant function analysis was performed to assess the relation between students in the senior forms and dimensions of career maturity and personal coping. The analysis employed techniques of descriptive discriminant analysis, where the emphasis is the relationship between these variables, rather than prediction. Such an emphasis is relevant when the purpose of the analysis is exploratory, as compared with confirmatory (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

The three groups were defined by form level, including fifth form students, sixth form students, and students in the seventh form, respectively. An indication of students’ career maturity was provided by scores on the career planning, career exploration, world of work knowledge and career decision-making skills’ scales of the Career Development Inventory-Australian adaptation (CDI-A). The strong association between occupational knowledge and decision skills in this research, indicated by the considerably high correlation coefficient ($r=.89$) between the variables representing these dimensions (refer Table 8.2, page 162 of this thesis), suggested a problem with multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996); a threat to the generalisability of the results. This pre-empted the decision to combine these variables in the present analysis to provide an index of career development knowledge and skills. This combination is a strategy suggested by the authors of the CDI-A and one in which Lokan (1984) claims “makes a concise cognitive scale with increased reliability” (p.3). Personal coping was assessed by student responses on the Adolescent Coping Scale (ACS) providing separate scores on three approaches to coping comprising problem-focused, reference to others and non-productive strategies.

The Box’s M test was included to assess the equality of covariance matrices for the assumption of multivariate normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996) for the present data. The resulting F value of .3063 (df 6, 2887.8) was insignificant ($p=.0941$), indicating a negligible difference between the matrices and supporting the application of discriminant analysis for the present data.

The following discriminant analysis yielded two functions, with a combined chi-square ($df=12$) of 56.513 ($p<.05$), indicating a statistically significant association

between career development, personal coping and the form level of senior students in the sample. After removal of the first function, there was still sufficiently strong association between the variables, with a chi-square ($df=5$) of 12.704 ($p<.05$). This indicates two dimensions whereby career maturity and personal coping are reliably associated with student differences at each of the three separate form levels. The canonical correlation for the first function, indicating the magnitude of the relationship between form level and the dimensions of career maturity and personal coping was reasonably high (.56), accounting for 86.6 percent of the variability between students across the three form levels and indicating 31.3 percent of the variance shared between form level differences and differences on scores of career maturity and personal coping. The relationship between these variables on the second function was comparatively lower (canonical correlation=.26), accounting for the remaining 13.4 percent of variability between form levels although designating a negligible 6.7 percent of shared variance.

The mean discriminant score (centroid) for each group together with the standardised and structural coefficients for each function are provided in Table 1. Along the first function the fifth and sixth formers, with centroids of -.009 and -.367, respectively, differed appreciably from the seventh formers (centroid=1.990) by way of the strategies they employed to cope with career-related concerns and orientation toward career planning. Whereas standardised coefficients for the first function suggest all three approaches to coping were important in separating the fifth and sixth formers from the seventh form students (with coefficients ranging from .926 for reference to other, to -.439 for problem solving, and -.426 for non-productive approaches), the pattern of structural coefficients for this function indicate that form differences in coping reflect primarily the tendency to approach career-related concerns by way of talking with others (structural coefficient=.812), followed by relative orientation toward career planning (structural coefficient=.440). As indicated by mean scores reported in Tables' A2.4 (page 209) and A2.5 (page 210), the fifth formers (mean=47.6) and the sixth formers (mean=48.8) in this study were less likely to approach career-related concerns by talking with others as compared with the seventh form group (mean = 55.3). On the career development dimension of planning, the seventh formers (mean=69.1), were more likely to report greater orientation towards

the need for and usefulness of career planning than students in the fifth and sixth forms (mean=58.6 and 60.3, respectively).

The analysis of these indicators on the second function showed a separation of fifth formers from the sixth formers (centroids=-.254 and .294, respectively) primarily by the non-productive approach to solving career-related problems (structural coefficient=.457), alongside the career development dimensions of knowledge and skills (structural coefficient=.492) and the extent to which students had engaged in career exploration (structural coefficient=-.488). Tables A2.4 and A2.5 show that fifth form students are slightly more likely to respond non-productively to career-related concerns (mean=53.6) than the sixth formers (mean=52.2). With regard to career development, the sixth formers were likely to possess a higher level of career-related knowledge and skills (mean=5.4) and to have experienced a wider range of useful career exploration sources (mean=46.1) than those in the fifth form (mean=4.8 and 44.7, respectively).

Table 1
Form level group centroids, together with standardised and structural canonical discriminant function coefficients for each dimension of career maturity and strategy of coping

Variable	Group Centroids		Standardised Coefficients		Structural Coefficients	
	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2	FUNCTION 1	FUNCTION 2
Form level						
Form 5 (n=228)	-0.009	-0.254				
Form 6 (n=235)	-0.367	0.294				
Form 7 (n=110)	1.990	0.150				
Career Maturity						
Career Planning			0.428	0.477	0.440	0.318
Career Exploration			0.068	-0.428	0.072	-0.488
Career knowledge and skills			-0.088	0.548	0.146	0.492
Coping strategies						
Problem solving			-0.439	-0.346	-0.128	-0.370
Reference to others			0.926	0.323	0.812	-0.139
Non-productive			-0.426	0.534	-0.076	0.457

Note: N=571, representing 87.3 percent of the sample. Excluded from the analysis were those cases (students) with at least one missing discriminating variable.

In summary, the career development characteristics and strategies for dealing with career related concerns differ appreciably amongst senior secondary school students, suggesting that careers assistance at this level in the school needs be responsive to this variability. In the analysis reported above, these differences were assessed as a function of students form level. In particular, seventh form students tended to consult with others more often than the fifth and sixth formers, whereas the fifth form students were distinct from their sixth form peers in that they were more likely to approach career concerns non-productively, such as worrying about what might happen and ignoring the problem. For the practitioner in schools, these results suggest fifth formers especially may benefit considerably from learning about more constructive strategies for dealing with career development issues.

The attitude toward career planning differed amongst the young people in this study as did useful career exploration experiences, general knowledge of the world of work and related decision-making strategies. Seventh form students were more likely to be aware of the need to plan ahead for the future and to have accepted responsibility for plans related to future career journeys than young people in the fifth and sixth form. Thus, the orientation toward career planning and the personal empowerment that comes from this would seem a worthwhile approach to careers assistance at this level of the secondary curriculum.

Compared to their fifth form counterparts, those in the sixth form were likely to have engaged in more useful exploratory experiences, to possess a little more general information about the world of work and to be slightly more capable of making 'good' decisions around career-related issues. Thus, exploratory experiences and acquisition of the career development knowledge and skills to enable realistic and competent planning and decision-making would seem to be a relevant orientation for careers assistance for fifth and sixth formers, and for this former group in particular, an additional emphasis on 'useful' career exploration experience, knowledge and skills development may prove a valuable contribution to the schools career development programme.

Adolescent Coping Scale (ACS)

Additional information on the technical qualities of the ASC

As discussed on pages 126-127 of this thesis, the User's Manual (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) provides favourable information in support of the validity and reliability of the ACS (Specific Short Form). Whilst this scale was screened by members of the school management and guidance network (refer p134) and seen to have high face validity, this in itself does not guarantee that the ACS was the most appropriate tool for assessing students' coping repertoire in the present study. Further information on the technical qualities for the present study are provided by the results of internal consistency (alpha) of the ACS sub-scales: problem-focused coping, coping by reference to others, and non-productive coping, and intercorrelations (Pearson product-moment) with associated significance levels. These intercorrelations and significance levels are shown in Table 2 below.

Internal consistency checks resulted in an alpha coefficient of .62 for the problem-solving sub-scale, .59 for the reference to others sub-scale, and .61 for the non-productive sub-scale of the ACS specific short form used in this study. These coefficients compare favourably with similar checks for internal consistency of the specific short form sub-scales reported for the norming sample in the ACS manual (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) although, generally, the appraisal for reliability based on the figures reported for the present research should be seen and understood cautiously. The authors' report alpha coefficients (Table 12, page 42 of the manual) of .66, .66, and .69 for each of the problem-solving, reference to others, and non-productive sub-scales, respectively.

Table 2
Inter-correlations and significance levels (in parenthesis)
of the Adolescent Coping Scale (Short Form) sub-scales

ACS Sub-scales	1 Problem- focused	2 Coping by reference to others	3 Non- productive coping
1 Problem-focused coping			
2 Coping by reference to others	.21 (p=.022)		
3 Non-productive coping	-.38 (p=.000)	.26 (p=.001)	

As shown in Table 2, the three sub-scales are significantly related, with the highest coefficient (-.38) indicating an inverse relationship between problem focused coping and non-productive coping. Conceptually, the pattern in Table 2 is not surprising as all three sub-scales represent dimensions of the coping construct. The magnitude of the correlation coefficients in Table 2 are fairly low, suggesting that although these sub-scales represent dimensions of coping, they nevertheless seem to be measuring different dimensions of this construct. An inverse relationship between working at solving the problem and non-productive coping would be expected as these two represent opposite dimensions of the coping construct (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993). In relation to the construct validity of the ACS for the present sample, Table 2 suggests that whilst coping may be conceptualised as a series of distinct strategies, these strategies are unlikely nonetheless to be entirely orthogonal or independent. A similar conclusion is reported by (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993) in relation to factor analyses of the 18 items comprising the Short Form. In this context, support for the construct validity of the ACS used in the present study is suggested although, as with the index of reliability reported earlier, this result should be interpreted cautiously. Whilst the technical properties discussed here would seem to lean toward support for the internal consistency and construct validity of the ACS for the present study, the reader should keep in mind the caution of assuming generalisability of the present data (alluded to on page 134 of this thesis). The post-hoc discriminant function analysis reported above indicates that young people do employ a range of strategies to deal with career-related concerns and the ACS may provide a useful tool to explore the nature and implications of this construct in career development research. The potential of the ACS for use in career development research in New Zealand is aligned with its technical integrity and certainly, this researcher supports the continued exposure of the ACS in research that will provide further and more varied support for the reliability and validity of the instrument with New Zealand adolescents.